

James Craig

Oct. 17

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F I N G A L:
A N
A N C I E N T E P I C P O E M.
I N S I X B O O K S.

By OSSIAN the Son of FINGAL.

Translated into English Heroic Rhyme,

By JOHN WODROW, M. A. one of the Ministers of Ilay.

I N T W O V O L U M E S.

V O L. I.

E D I N B U R G H:

Printed for the AUTHOR.

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MDCCLXXI.



T O

DANIEL CAMPBELL

OF SHAWFIELD, ESQ;

THE FOLLOWING VERSIFICATION

O F

F I N G A L,

AS A SMALL TESTIMONY OF GRATITUDE,

FOR MANY FAVOURS RECEIVED,

I S,

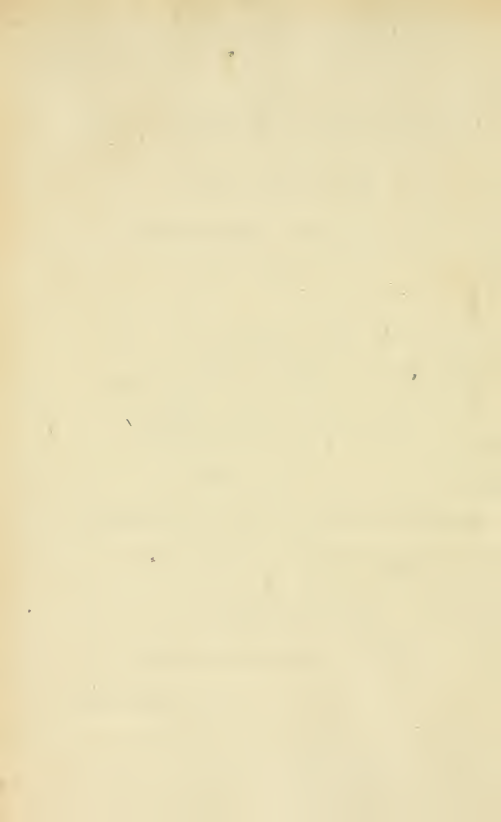
WITH THE HIGHEST ESTEEM AND RESPECT,

MOST HUMBL Y INSCRIBED, BY

HIS MUCH OBLIGED,

AND MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,

JOHN WODROW.



P R E F A C E.

TO entertain any doubt of the antiquity or authenticity of the poems of OssiAN, as some pretend to do, can only flow from an affected singularity of thinking, or from the mere wantonness of prejudice. They carry such internal evidence, and are so strongly marked with the characters of antiquity, as cannot fail to convince every impartial mind, that they must be referred to a period long since past, and very remote. As to their authenticity, it was never so much as called in question in Scotland; over all the highlands and isles, it is universally acknowledged. It

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is well known that the most illiterate old people there can still repeat great parts of many of the poems. Unhappily, indeed, they are often found much interpolated and blended with the wild chimeras and absurdities of the bards of degenerate days: Though this is to be regreted, it is not greatly to be wondered at. But in these fragments, which are common, one of moderate discernment can discover such inequality in the language, such inconsistency in the sentiments and events, as clearly mark out what are the real production of OSSIAN, and what are falsely ascribed to him. Mr M'Pherson has great merit in collecting and recovering so many of them. His arranging and purging them of what was modern and spurious, must have cost him no little labour; his presenting them to the world

pure

pure and unmixed, discovers his being a great master of the antiquities of his country, of the original Galic, and his being happy in a well-formed taste for the genuine beauties of poetry. His translation is faithful, accurate, elegant, and masterly. Such as are judges of the original have long despaired of ever seeing a strength of genius capable of doing them so much justice in the English language. To transfuse the spirit of an author into a literal version, is allowed by all to be extremely difficult, if not impossible. In this he has had remarkable success: yet he will readily confess, and it must be evident to many, that he often falls short of his original. This in general, must, in a great measure, be ascribed to the different idioms of languages; though in this case it may perhaps

haps be rather imputed to a failure in the English tongue: for if any could support the passion and dignity of *Ossian* throughout, he seems possessed of abilities equal to the task. So much has already been advanced by him and others for establishing the antiquity and authenticity of these poems, as precludes the necessity of my saying any thing with regard to them. And indeed, if the united voice of Scotland and Ireland; if the living testimony of the natives of these kingdoms, wherever scattered over the globe, can be deemed insufficient to evince this matter, and free it of all doubt and suspicion, it is in vain to combat any longer with ungenerous, unreasonable prejudice, with obstinate and wilful incredulity. Every unbiassed person will readily own, that these poems are

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the monuments of a very ancient age, and must enlarge our knowledge of the human mind and character; and in this view, it must be admitted, that they are one of the greatest curiosities that have at any period been presented to the republic of letters. They are now familiarly known throughout the British dominions; they have been translated into the most polite, modern, European languages, and received with deserved applause: No small proof this of their poetical merit, and their holding a high rank as works of a superior genius. In Britain, indeed, different opinions have appeared concerning them. Some authors, it is well known, owe much of their reputation to the implicit acquiescence of the many, in the encomiums bestowed upon them by some, with whom it

has been thought honourable to agree in sentiment. Others, again, have been rated much below their merit, merely because some fashionable critic has decried their performances. Thus has it fared with our northern bard. But if his merit is to be decided by authority, may not that of Dr BLAIR, who has done no more justice to OSSIAN as a poet, than honour to himself as a critic, be singly opposed to the pedantry of some, and the empty echoings of others, who list themselves among the decriers of the Celtic bard? For the entertainment of readers of taste, I shall here beg leave to transcribe, from the Doctor's excellent dissertation, an abstract of his remarks on OSSIAN's works in general, and what relate to the following poem in particular.

The

“ The two great characteristics of OSSIÂN’S poetry are tenderness and sublimity. It breathes nothing of the gay and chearful kind. An air of seriousness and solemnity is diffused over the whole. OSSIÂN is perhaps the only poet who never relaxes, or lets himself down into the light and amusing strain; which, with the bulk of readers, is no small disadvantage to him. He moves perpetually in the high region of the grand and pathetic. The events recorded are all serious and grave; the scenery throughout, wild and romantic. The extended heath by the sea-shore; the mountain shaded with mist; the torrent rushing through a solitary valley; the scattered oaks, and the tombs of warriors overgrown with moss; all produce a solemn attention in the mind, and prepare it for great

and extraordinary events. We find not in him an imagination that sports itself, and dresses out gay trifles to please the fancy. His poetry, more perhaps than that of any other, deserves to be styled, *The Poetry of the Heart*. It is a heart penetrated with noble sentiments, with sublime and tender passions; a heart that glows, and kindles the fancy; a heart that is full, and pours itself forth. OSSIAN did not write to please readers and critics: He sung from the love of poetry and song. His delight was to think of the heroes among whom he flourished; to recal the affecting incidents of his life; to dwell upon his past wars, and loves, and friendships; till, as he expresses it himself, “there comes a voice to
 “ OSSIAN and awakes his soul: It is the
 “ voice of years that are gone; they roll be-
 “ fore

“ fore me with all their deeds.” And under this true poetic inspiration, giving vent to his genius, no wonder we should so often hear, and acknowledge in his strains, the powerful and ever-pleasing voice of Nature.

“ Of all the great poets, HOMER is the one whose manner, and whose times come the nearest to OSSIAN’S. The Greek has, in several points, a manifest superiority: This is by no means astonishing. HOMER lived in a country where society was much farther advanced: He had beheld many more objects; cities built and flourishing; laws instituted; order, discipline, and arts begun. His field of observation was much larger and more splendid; he consequently possesses a larger compass of ideas, has more diversity in his characters,

characters, and a much deeper knowledge of human nature. But if OSSIAN's ideas be less diversified, they are all however of the kind fittest for poetry : The bravery and generosity of heroes ; the tenderness of lovers ; the attachments of friends, parents, and children. In a rude age and country, though the events be few, the undissipated mind broods over them more ; they strike the imagination, and fire the passions in a higher degree, and become happier materials to a poetical genius, than the same events when scattered through the wide circle of more varied action and cultivated life. We find not in OSSIAN the sprightly and chearful poet : He uniformly maintains the gravity and solemnity of the Celtic hero. OSSIAN had survived all his friends, and was disposed

disposed to melancholy by the incidents of his life. On all occasions he is frugal of his words, and never gives more of an image or description than is just sufficient to place it before us in one clear point of view. It is a blaze of lightning, which flashes and vanishes. Both the poets are dramatic. HOMER's speeches indeed are highly characteristical; yet, if he be tedious any where, it is in these. OSSIAN is concise and rapid in his speeches, as he is in every other thing. Both poets are eminently sublime, but a difference may be remarked in the species of their sublimity. HOMER's is accompanied with more impetuosity and fire; OSSIAN's with more of a solemn and awful grandeur. HOMER hurries you along; OSSIAN elevates and fixes you in astonishment. The first is most sublime
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in actions and battles ; the other in description and sentiment. In the pathetic, HOMER has great power ; but OSSIAN exerts that power much oftener, and has the character of tenderness far more deeply imprinted on his works : No poet knew better how to seize and melt the heart. With regard to dignity of sentiment, the pre-eminence must clearly be given to OSSIAN. This is indeed a surprising circumstance, that in point of humanity, magnanimity, virtuous feelings of every kind, our Celtic bard should be distinguished to such a degree, that not only the heroes of HOMER, but even those of the polite and refined VIRGIL, are left far behind those of OSSIAN.

“After these general observations on the genius

nus and spirit of our author, I proceed to a nearer view of his works, and shall begin with FINGAL, as it is the first great poem in this Collection. To refuse the title of an epic poem to FINGAL, because it is not in every little particular exactly conformable to the practice of HOMER and VIRGIL, were the mere squeamishness and pedantry of criticism. An epic poem is by its nature one of the most moral of all poetical compositions: Hardly is there any tale, any subject a poet can choose for such a work, but will afford some general moral instruction. But its moral tendency is by no means to be limited to some common-place maxim, which may be gathered from the story: It arises from the admiration of heroic actions, which such a composition is calculated to produce; from the

virtuous emotions which the characters and incidents raise, whilst we read it; from the happy impression which all the parts separately, as well as the whole taken together, leave upon the mind. Now, if it be asked, what is the general moral of *FINGAL*? it obviously furnishes one not inferior to that of any other poet, *viz.* That wisdom and bravery always triumph over brutal force; or another, nobler still, That the most compleat victory over an enemy is obtained by that moderation and generosity which convert him into a friend. The unity of action which, among critics, is the chief and most material rule, is so strictly preserved in *FINGAL*, that it must be perceived by every reader. It is a more compleat unity than what arises from relating the actions of one man; it is the unity

ty of one enterprize, the deliverance of Ireland from the invasion of SWARAN; an enterprize which has surely the full heroic dignity. All the incidents recorded bear a constant reference to one end; no double plot is carried on; but the parts unite into a regular whole: And as the action is one and great, so it is an entire or compleat action. Not only is unity of subject maintained in FINGAL, but that of time and place also. The Autumn is clearly pointed out, as the season of the action; and from beginning to end, the scene is never shifted from the heath of Lena, along the sea-shore. Throughout the whole of FINGAL there reigns that grandeur of sentiment, style, and imagery, which ought ever to distinguish this high species of poetry. OSSIAN invokes no Muse, for he acknowledged none;

but his occasional addresses to MALVINA have a finer effect than the invocation of any Muse. He sets out with no formal proposition of his subject ; but the subject naturally and easily unfolds itself. HOMER's art in magnifying the character of ACHILLES has been universally admired. OSSIAN certainly shews no less art in aggrandizing FINGAL. Nothing could be more happily imagined for this purpose, than the whole management of the last battle, wherein GAUL the son of MORN I had besought FINGAL to retire, and to leave to him and his other Chiefs the honour of the day. The generosity of the king in agreeing to this proposal, the majesty with which he retreats to the hill, from whence he was to behold the engagement, attended by his bards, and waving the lightning of his sword ;

sword ; his perceiving the Chiefs overpowered by numbers ; but, from unwillingness to deprive them of the glory of victory by coming in person to their assistance, first sending ULLIN the bard to animate their courage ; and at last, when the danger becomes more pressing, his rising in his might, and interposing like a divinity to decide the doubtful fate of the day ; are all circumstances contrived with so much art, as plainly discover the Celtic bards to have been not unpractised in heroic poetry.

The story which is the foundation of FIN-GAL is in itself simple. SWARAN comes to invade IRELAND. CUCHULLIN, the guardian of the young king, had applied for assistance to FINGAL, who reigned in the opposite

posite coast of Scotland. But before FINGAL's arrival, he is hurried by rash counsel to encounter SWARAN. He is defeated; he retreats, and desponds. FINGAL arrives in this conjuncture. The battle is for some time dubious, but in the end he conquers SWARAN; and the remembrance of SWARAN's being the brother of AGANDECCA, who had once saved his life, makes him dismiss him honourably. HOMER, it is true, has filled up his story with a much greater variety of particulars than OSSIAN, and in this has shewn a compass of invention superior to that of the other poet: But it cannot be denied, that tho' HOMER be more circumstantial, his incidents are less diversified in kind than those of OSSIAN. War and bloodshed reign throughout the Iliad; and notwithstanding all the fertility

fertility of HOMER's invention, there is so much uniformity in his subjects, that there are few readers, who, before the close, are not tired of perpetual fighting : Whereas, in OSSIAN, the mind is relieved by a more agreeable diversity. There is a finer mixture of war and heroism, with love and friendship, of martial with tender scenes, than perhaps is to be met with in any other poet. The episodes too have great propriety, as natural and proper to that age and country, consisting of the songs of bards, which are known to have been the great entertainment of the Celtic heroes in war, as well as in peace. These songs are not introduced at random, if you except the episode of *Duchomar and Morna*, in the first book, which, though beautiful, is more unartful than any of the rest : They always

ways have some particular relation to the actor who is interested, or to the events which are going on ; and whilst they vary the scene, they preserve a sufficient connection with the main subject, by the fitness and propriety of their introduction.

AS FINGAL'S love to AGANDECCA influences some circumstances of the poem, particularly the honourable dismissal of SWARAN at the end, it was necessary that we should be let into this part of the Hero's story. But as it lay without the compass of the present action, it could only be regularly introduced in an episode. The conclusion of the poem is strictly according to rule, and is every way noble and pleasing. The reconciliation of the contending heroes, the consolation of

CUCHULLIN.

CUCHULLIN, and the general felicity that crowns the action, soothe the mind in a very agreeable manner, and form that passage, from agitation and trouble, to perfect quiet and repose, which by the critics is required as the proper termination of the epic work. So much for the unity and general conduct of the action in FINGAL. HOMER is known to have founded his Iliad on historical facts concerning the war of Troy, which was famous throughout all Greece. It is the business of a poet, according to ARISTOTLE, not to be a meer annalist of facts, but to embellish truth with beautiful, probable, and useful fictions ; to copy nature like painters, who preserve a likeness, but exhibit their objects more grand and beautiful than they are in reality. That OSSIAN has followed this course, and build-

ing upon true history, has sufficiently adorned it with poetical fiction for aggrandizing his characters and facts, will not, I believe, be questioned by most readers. At the same time, the foundation which those facts and characters had in truth, and the share which the poet himself had in the transactions which he records, must be considered as no small advantage to his work. For truth makes an impression on the mind far beyond any fiction ; and no man, let his imagination be ever so strong, relates any events so feelingly as those in which he has been interested, paints any scene so naturally as one which he has seen, or draws any characters in such strong colours as those which he has personally known.---The natural representation of human characters in an epic poem, is highly essential

essential to its merit. Though OSSIAN be much inferior in this respect to HOMER, he will be found to be equal, if not superior to VIRGIL, and has indeed given all the display of human nature which the simple occurrences of his times could be expected to furnish. No dead uniformity of character prevails in FINGAL; but, on the contrary, the principal characters are not only clearly distinguished, but sometimes artfully contrasted, so as to illustrate each other. OSSIAN's heroes, like HOMER's, are all brave; but their bravery, like HOMER's too, is of different kinds. For instance; the prudent, the sedate, the modest and circumspect CONNAL, is finely opposed to the presumptuous, rash, overbearing, but gallant and generous CALMAR. CALMAR hurries CUCHULLIN into action by his temerity;

rity ; and when he sees the bad effect of his counsels, he will not survive the disgrace. CONNAL, like another ULYSSES, attends GUCHULLIN to his retreat, counsels and comforts him under his misfortune. The fierce, the proud, and high-spirited SWARAN, is admirably contrasted with the calm, the moderate, and generous FINGAL. The character of OSCAR is always a favourite one. The amiable warmth of the young warrior, his eager impetuosity in the day of action, his passion for fame, his submission to his father, his tenderness for MALVINA, are the strokes of a masterly pencil ; the strokes are few, but it is the hand of Nature, and attracts the heart. OSSIAN's own character, the old man, the hero, and the bard, all in one, presents to us a most respectable and venerable

ble figure, which we always contemplate with pleasure. CUCHULLIN is a hero of the highest class, daring, magnanimous, and exquisitely sensible to honour. We become attached to his interest, and are deeply touched with his distress; and after the admiration raised for him in the first part of the poem, it is a proof of OSSIAN's masterly genius, that he durst adventure to produce to us another hero, compared with whom, even the great CUCHULLIN should be only an inferior personage, and who should rise as far above him as CUCHULLIN rises above the rest.

“ Here indeed, in the character and description of FINGAL, OSSIAN triumphs almost unrivalled; for we may boldly defy all antiquity to shew us any hero equal to FINGAL.

Throughout

Throughout the whole of Ossián's works, he is presented to us in all that variety of lights which give the full display of a character. In him concur almost all the qualities that can ennoble human nature; that can either make us admire the hero, or love the man. He is not only unconquerable in war, but he makes his people happy by his wisdom in the days of peace. He is truly the father of his people. He is known by the epithet of "FINGAL of the mildest look," and distinguished on every occasion by humanity and generosity. He is merciful to his foes, full of affection to his children, full of concern about his friends, and never mentions AGANDECCA, his first love, without the utmost tenderness. He is the universal protector of the distressed: None ever went sad from

FINGAL.

FINGAL.---“ O OSCAR ! bend the strong
 “ in arms, but spare the feeble hand. Be
 “ thou a stream of many tides against the foes
 “ of thy people ; but like the gale that moves
 “ the grass, to those who ask thine aid :
 “ So TRENMORE lived ; such TRA-
 “ THAL was ; and such has FINGAL
 “ been. My arm was the support of the in-
 “ jured ; the weak rested behind the light-
 “ ning of my steel.”--These were the maxims
 of true heroism, to which he formed his
 grandson. His fame is represented as every
 where spread ; the greatest heroes acknow-
 ledge his superiority ; his enemies tremble at
 his name ; and the highest encomium that
 can be bestowed on one whom the poet
 would most exalt, is to say, That his soul
 was like the soul of FINGAL.

“ To

“ To do justice to the merit of OSSIAN in supporting such a character as this, I must observe, what is not commonly attended to, That there is no part of poetical execution more difficult than to draw a perfect character in such a manner as to render it distinct and affecting to the mind. Some strokes of human imperfection and frailty, are what usually give us the most clear view, and the most sensible impression of a character, because they present to us a man such as we have seen; they recal known features of human nature. When poets go beyond this range, and attempt to describe a faultless hero, they, for the most part, set before us a sort of vague undistinguishable character, such as the imagination cannot lay hold of or realize to itself as the object of affection. We know

know how much VIRGIL has failed in this particular. His perfect hero, ÆNEAS, is an unanimated, insipid personage, whom we may pretend to admire, but whom no one can heartily love. But what VIRGIL has failed in, OSSIAN, to our astonishment, has successfully executed. His FINGAL, though exhibited without any of the common human failings, is nevertheless a real man; a character which touches and interests every reader. To this it has much contributed, that the poet has represented him as an old man, and by this has gained the advantage of throwing around him a great many circumstances peculiar to that age, which paint him to the fancy in a more distinct light. He is surrounded with his family: He instructs his children in the principles of virtue: He is

narrative of his past exploits : He is venerable with the gray locks of age : He is frequently disposed to moralize, like an old man, on human vanity, and the prospect of death. There is more art, at least more felicity in this, than may at first be imagined. Youth and old age are the two states of human life capable of being placed in the most picturesque lights. Middle age is more general and vague, and has fewer circumstances peculiar to the idea of it ; and when any object is in a situation that admits it to be rendered particular, and to be clothed with a variety of circumstances, it always stands out more clear and full in poetical description.

“ Divine or supernatural agents are often introduced into epic poetry, forming what is called

called the *machinery* of it, which, according to the critics, is an essential part. For the bulk of readers, the marvellous has always a mighty charm. It gratifies the imagination, and affords room for striking and sublime description. No wonder therefore that all poets have a strong propensity towards it. But to adjust the marvellous with the probable is extremely difficult. All machinery must be faulty, which removes the probable from our view, or obscures it under a cloud of incredible fictions. Neither is any poet at liberty to invent what system of the marvellous he pleases. He must avail himself either of the religious faith, or the superstitious credulity of the country wherein he lives, so as to give an air of probability to events which are most contrary to the com-

mon course of nature. OSSIAN in these respects appears to have been remarkably happy. He has indeed followed the same course with HOMER, who found the traditional stories on which he built his Iliad, mingled with popular legends concerning the intervention of the gods; and he adopted these, because they amused the fancy. OSSIAN, in like manner, found the tales of his country full of ghosts and spirits: It is likely he believed them himself, and he introduced them because they gave his poems that solemn and marvellous cast which suited his genius. This was the only machinery which he could employ with propriety, because it agreed with the common belief of the country. It was happy because it did not interfere in the least with the proper display of human characters

ters and actions; and because it served to diversify the scene, and to heighten the subject by an awful grandeur, which is the great design of machinery. OSSIAN's, for the most part, turns on the appearances of departed spirits. These are represented, not as purely immaterial, but as thin airy forms, which can be visible or invisible at pleasure: their voice is feeble, their arm is weak; but they are endowed with a knowledge more than human. OSSIAN describes ghosts with all the particularity of one who had seen and conversed with them, and whose imagination was full of the impression they had left upon it. He calls up those awful and tremendous ideas, which, in the style of Shakespeare, "harrow up the soul."---As OSSIAN's supernatural beings are described with a surprising

sing force of imagination, so they are introduced with propriety. We have only three ghosts in FINGAL; that of CRUGAL, which comes to warn the host of impending destruction, and to advise them to save themselves by retreat; that of EVIRALLIN, the spouse of OSSIAN, which calls him to rise and rescue their son from danger; and that of AGANDECCA, which, just before the last engagement with SWARAN, moves FINGAL to pity, by mourning for the approaching destruction of her kinsmen and people. OSSIAN's mythology is, to speak so, the mythology of human nature: It is founded on what has been the popular belief in all ages and countries, concerning the appearances of departed spirits. It has dignity upon all occasions. It is indeed a dignity of the dark

and

and awful kind ; but this is proper, because coincident with the strain and spirit of the poetry. Though his machinery be always solemn, it is not however always dreary or dismal : It is enlivened as much as the subject would permit, by those pleasant and beautiful appearances which he sometimes introduces of the spirits of the hill. These throughout his poems, are gentle spirits, descending on sun-beams ; their forms white and bright, fair, moving on the plain ; their voices sweet, and their visits to men propitious. The greatest praise that can be given to a living woman, is to say, “ She is fair as the ghost of the hill, “ when it moves on a sun-beam at noon, over “ the silence of MORVEN.”---“ The hunter “ shall hear my voice from his booth. He “ shall fear, but love my voice ; for sweet “ shall

“ Shall my voice be for my friends, for pleasure
 “ Want were they to me.”

“ Besides ghosts, or the spirits of departed men, we find in OSSIAN some instances of another kind of machinery. Spirits of a superior nature to ghosts are sometimes alluded to, which have power to embroil the deep; to call forth wind and storms, and pour them on the land of the stranger; to overturn forests, and to send death among the people. The engagement of FINGAL with the spirit of LODA in CARRIC-THURA cannot be mentioned without admiration. I forbear transcribing the passage, as it must have drawn the attention of every one who has read the works of OSSIAN. The undaunted courage of FINGAL, opposed to all
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the terrors of the Scandinavian god, the appearance and the speech of that awful spirit, the wound which he receives, and the shriek which he sends forth, “ as rolled into himself, he rose upon the wind,” are full of the most amazing and terrible majesty. We know there are poetical precedents of great authority, for fictions fully as extravagant : And if HOMER be forgiven for making DIOMED attack and wound in battle the gods whom that chief himself worshipped, OSSIAN surely is pardonable for making his hero superior to the god of a foreign territory.

“ After so particular an examination of FIN-
GAL, I proceed to make some observations
on OSSIAN’s manner of writing, under the

general heads of *description, imagery, and sentiment.*

“ A poet of original genius is always distinguished by his talent for description, and makes us imagine that we see the object before our eyes. That OSSIÂN possesses this descriptive power in a high degree, we have a clear proof from the effect which his descriptions produce upon the imaginations of those who read him with any degree of attention and taste. Few poets are more interesting. We contract an intimate acquaintance with his principal heroes. The characters, the manners, the face of the country becomes familiar ; we even think we could draw the figure of his ghosts. In a word ; whilst reading him, we are transported

as into a new region, and dwell among his objects as if they were all real.

“ It were easy to point out several instances of exquisite painting in our author. The poem *CARTHON* furnishes three, than which nothing can be more lively and natural ; first, the description of the ruins of *BALCLUTHA* ; then, how the conflagration of his city affected *CARTHON*, when a child ; and the assembling of the chiefs round *FINGAL*, who had been warned of some impending danger by the appearance of a prodigy, are described with so many picturesque and affecting circumstances, that one fancies himself present to the scenes described.

“ It has been objected to *OSSIAN*, that his

descriptions of military actions are imperfect, and much less diversified by circumstances than those of HOMER. This is in some measure true. OSSIAN's genius was of a different kind from HOMER's: It led him to hurry towards grand objects, rather than to amuse himself with particulars of less importance. He could dwell on the death of a favourite hero, but that of a private man seldom stopped his rapid course. HOMER's genius was more comprehensive than OSSIAN's: It included a wider circle of objects, and could work up any incident into description. OSSIAN's was more limited; but the region within which it chiefly exerted itself was the highest of all, the region of the pathetic and sublime. We must not imagine, however, that OSSIAN's battles consist only of general indistinct

indistinct description. Such beautiful incidents are sometimes introduced, and circumstances so much diversified, as show that he could have embellished his scenes with an abundant variety of particulars, if his genius had led him to dwell upon them. One man

“ is stretched in the dust of his native land ;
 “ he fell where often he had spread the feast,
 “ and often raised the voice of the harp.”

The maid of INNISTORE is introduced, in a moving apostrophe, as weeping for another ; and a third, “ as rolled in the dust he lifted
 “ his faint eyes to the king,” is remembered and mourned by FINGAL as the friend of AGANDECCA. The blood pouring from the wound of one who was slain at night, is heard
 “ hissing on the half-extinguished oak.”

Another, climbing a tree to escape from his
 foe,

foe, is pierced by his spear from behind ;
 “ shrieking, panting, he fell, whilst moss
 “ and withered branches pursue his fall,
 “ and strew the blue arms of GAUL.”---Never
 was a finer picture drawn of the ardor of
 two youthful warriors than the following :
 “ I saw GAUL in his armour, and my soul
 “ was mixed with his : for the fire of battle
 “ was in his eyes ; he looked to the foe with
 “ joy. We spoke the words of friendship in
 “ secret, and the lightning of our swords
 “ poured together. We drew them behind
 “ the wood, and tried the strength of our
 “ arms on the empty air.”---The descrip-
 tions of OSSIAN are always concise, which
 adds much to their beauty and force. When
 FINGAL, after having conquered the haughty
 SWARAN, proposes to dismiss him with ho-
 nour :

nour : “ Raife to-morrow thy white fails to
 “ the wind, thou brother of AGANDECCA !”
 He conveys, by thus addreffing his enemy, a
 ftronger impreffion of the emotions then paf-
 fing within his mind, than if whole paragraphs
 had been fpent in defcribing the conflict be-
 tween refentment againft SWARAN, and the
 tender remembrance of his ancient love. No
 amplification is needed to give us the moft
 full idea of a hardy veteran, after the few fol-
 lowing words : “ His fhield is marked with
 “ the ftrokes of battle ; his red eye defpifes
 “ danger.” When OSCAR, left alone, was
 furrounded by foes, “ he flood, growing in
 “ his place, like the flood of the narrow
 “ vale.” And a whole croud of ideas con-
 cerning the circumftances of domeftic forrow,
 occafioned by a young warrior’s firft going
 forth

forth to battle, is poured upon the mind by
 these words : “ CALMAR leaned on his fa-
 “ ther’s spear, that spear which he brought
 “ from LARA’s hall, when the soul of his
 “ mother was sad.” --- OSSIAN’s genius,
 though chiefly turned towards the sublime
 and pathetic, was not confined to it : in sub-
 jects also of grace and delicacy he discovers
 the hand of a master. Take for an example
 the following elegant description of AGAN-
 DECCA, wherein the tenderness of TIBUL-
 LUS seems united with the majesty of VIR-
 GIL : “ The daughter of the snow over-
 “ heard, and left the hall of her secret sigh.
 “ She came in all her beauty, like the moon
 “ from the cloud of the east. Loveliness
 “ was around her as light. Her steps were
 “ like the music of songs. She saw the
 youth,

“ youth, and loved him. He was the stolen
 “ sigh of her soul. Her blue eyes rolled on
 “ him in secret; and she blessed the chief of
 “ MORVEN.” Several other instances might
 be produced of the feelings of love and
 friendship, painted by our author with a
 most natural and happy delicacy.

“ The joy of grief,” is one of OSSIAN’S re-
 markable expressions, several times repeated.
 It stands in no need of defence from authority;
 for it is a natural and just expression, and
 conveys a clear idea of that gratification which
 a virtuous heart often feels in the indulgence
 of a tender melancholy, between which, and
 the destructive effect of overpowering grief,
 OSSIAN makes a very proper distinction.
 “ There is joy in grief, when peace dwells
 VOL. I. g “ in

“ in the breasts of the sad. But sorrow
 “ wastes the mournful, O daughter of Tos-
 “ CAR! and their days are few.”---“ To
 “ give the joy of grief,” generally signifies
 to raise the strain of soft and grave music,
 and finely characterizes the taste of OSSIAN’S
 age and country. “ Strike the harp in my
 “ hall!” said the great FINGAL, in the
 midst of youth and victory; “ Strike the harp
 “ in my hall, and let FINGAL hear the song!
 “ Pleasant is the joy of grief; it is like the
 “ shower of spring, when it softens the
 “ branch of the oak, and the young leaf lifts
 “ its green head. Sing on, O bards! To-
 “ morrow we lift the sail.”

“ Of all the ornaments employed in descrip-
 tive poetry, comparisons or similies are the
 most

most splendid, and chiefly form what is called *the imagery* of a poem. In order to judge of the propriety of poetical imagery, we ought to be, in some measure, acquainted with the natural history of the country where the poem is laid.---OSSIAN is very correct in this particular. His imagery is, without exception, copied from that rude face of nature which he saw before his eyes. We meet with no Grecian or Italian scenery; but with the mists, and clouds, and storms of a northern mountainous region.

“ The great objection made to OSSIAN’S imagery is its uniformity, and the too frequent repetition of the same comparisons. In a work so thick-sown with similes, one could not but expect to find images of the same

kind, sometimes suggested to the poet by re-
 sembling objects; especially to a poet like
 OSSIAN, who wrote from the immediate im-
 pulse of poetical enthusiasm, and without
 much preparation of study or labour. Fertile
 as HOMER's imagination is acknowledged to
 be, who does not know how often his lions,
 and bulls, and flocks of sheep, recur with
 little or no variation, nay sometimes in the
 very same words? The objection made to Os-
 sian is, however, founded in a great mea-
 sure upon a mistake. It has been supposed
 by inattentive readers, that wherever the
 moon, the cloud, or the thunder, returns in
 a simile, it is the same simile, and the same
 moon, or cloud, or thunder, which they had
 met with a few pages before; whereas very
 often the similes are widely different. The
 object

object from which they are taken is indeed in substance the same: but the image is new; for the appearance of the object is changed: It is presented to the fancy in another attitude, and clothed with new circumstances, to make it suit the different illustration for which it is employed. In this lies Ossi-
 AN's great art, in so happily varying the form of the few natural appearances with which he was acquainted, as to make them correspond to a great many different objects. Let us take, for one instance, the moon, which is frequently introduced into his comparisons, and let us view how much our poet has diversified its appearance. The shield of a warrior is like "the darkened moon when
 "it moves a dun circle through the heavens."
 The face of a ghost, wan and pale, is like
 "the

“ the beam of the setting moon.” And a
 different appearance of a ghost, thin and in-
 distinct, is like “ the new moon seen through
 “ the gathered mist, when the sky pours
 “ down its flaky snow, and the world is fi-
 “ lent and dark;” or, in a different form
 still, it is “ like the watery beam of the moon,
 “ when it rushes from between two clouds,
 “ and the midnight shower is on the field.”
 A very opposite use is made of the moon, in
 the description of AGANDECCA: “ She came
 “ in all her beauty, like the moon from the
 “ cloud of the east.” Hope succeeded by
 disappointment is, “ joy rising on her face,
 “ and sorrow returning again like a thin
 “ cloud on the moon.” But when SWARAN,
 after his defeat, is cheered by FINGAL’s ge-
 nerosity, “ his face brightened like the full
 “ moon

“ moon of heaven, when the clouds vanish
 “ away, and leave her calm and broad in the
 “ midst of the sky.” *Venvela* is “ bright as
 “ the moon when it trembles o’er the we-
 “ stern wave ;” but the soul of the guilty
Uthal is “ dark as the troubled face of the
 “ moon when it foretels the storm.” And,
 by a very fanciful and uncommon allusion, it
 is said of CORMAC, who was to die in his
 early years, “ Nor long shalt thou lift the
 “ spear, mildly shining beam of youth ! Death
 “ stands dim behind thee, like the darken-
 “ ed half of the moon behind its growing
 “ light.”

“ Another instance of the same nature may
 be taken from mist, which, as being a very
 familiar appearance in the country of Os-

SIAN, he applies to a variety of purposes, and pursues through a great many forms. Sometimes, which one would hardly expect, he employs it to heighten the appearance of a beautiful object. The hair of MORNA is
 “ like the mist of Cromla, when it curls on
 “ the rock, and shines to the beam of the
 “ west. The song comes with its music to
 “ melt and please the ear. It is like soft
 “ mist, that, rising from a lake, pours on
 “ the silent vale. The green flowers are fill-
 “ ed with dew. The sun returns in its
 “ strength, and the mist is gone.” But for the most part, mist is employed as a similitude of some disagreeable or terrible object. “ The
 “ soul of NATHOS was sad, like the sun in
 “ the day of mist ; when his face is watery
 “ and dim. The darkness of old age comes
 “ like

“ like the mist of the desert. The face of a
 “ ghost is pale as the mist of Cromla. The
 “ gloom of battle is rolled along as a
 “ mist that is poured on the valley, when
 “ storms invade the silent sunshine of hea-
 “ ven.” Fame suddenly departing is likened
 to “ mist that flies away before the rustling
 “ wind of the vale.” A ghost slowly vanishing,
 to “ mist that melts by degrees on the sunny
 “ hill.” CAIRBAR, after his treacherous as-
 sassination of OSCAR, is compared to a pesti-
 lential fog: “ I love a foe like CATHMOR,”
 says FINCAL, “ his soul is great, his arm is
 “ strong, his battles are full of fame. But
 “ the little soul is like a vapour that hovers
 “ round the marshy lake: It never rises on
 “ the green hill, lest the winds meet it there.
 “ Its dwelling is in the cave, and it sends
 Vol. I. h “ forth

“ forth the dart of death.” This is a simile highly finished. Another still more striking, founded also on mist, may be seen in the 4th book of TEMORA. Two factious chiefs are contending. CATHMOR the king interposes, rebukes, and silences them. The poet intends to give us the highest idea of CATHMOR’s superiority, which he does effectually by the following happy image: “ They sunk
 “ from the king on either side like two co-
 “ lumns of morning mist, when the sun rises
 “ between them, on his glittering rocks.
 “ Dark is their rolling on either side; each
 “ towards its reedy pool.” These instances may sufficiently shew with what richness of imagination OSSIAN’s comparisons abound, and, at the same time, with what propriety of judgment they are employed. If his field was
 narrow,

narrow, it must be admitted to have been as well cultivated as its extent would allow. ---As it is usual to judge of poets from a comparison of their similes more than of other passages, let us see how HOMER and OSSIAN conducted some images of the same kind. The great objects of nature being common to the poets of all nations, and making the storehouse of all imagery, the ground-work of their comparisons must of course be frequently the same. It is only by viewing HOMER in the simplicity of a prose translation, that we can form any comparison between the two bards. The shock of two encountering armies, the noise and tumult of battle, afford one of the most grand and awful subjects of description, on which all epic poets have exerted their strength. Let us first hear HOMER.

The following description is a favourite one ;
 for we find it twice repeated in the same words :

“ When now the conflicting hosts joined in
 “ the field of battle, then were mutually op-
 “ posed shields and swords, and the strength of
 “ armed men. The bossy bucklers were dashed
 “ against each other. The universal tumult
 “ rose. There were mingled the triumphant
 “ shouts and the dying groans of the vic-
 “ tors and the vanquished. The earth
 “ streamed with blood. As when winter tor-
 “ rents, rushing from the mountains, pour
 “ into a narrow valley their violent waters ;
 “ they issue from a thousand springs, and
 “ mix in the hollowed channel : the distant
 “ shepherd hears on the mountain their roar
 “ from afar. Such was the terror and the
 “ shout of the engaging armies.” In ano-
 ther

ther passage, the poet, much in the manner of OSSIAN, heaps simile on simile, to express the vastness of the idea with which his imagination seems to labour. “ With a mighty
 “ shout the hosts engage! Not so loud roars
 “ the waves of ocean when driven against the
 “ shore by the whole force of the boisterous
 “ north; not so loud, in the woods of the
 “ mountain, the noise of the flame when ri-
 “ sing in its fury to consume the forest; not
 “ so loud the wind among the lofty oaks,
 “ when the wrath of the storm rages; as was
 “ the clamour of the Greeks and Trojans,
 “ when, roaring terrible, they rushed against
 “ each other.”

“ To these descriptions and similes we may oppose the following from OSSIAN, and leave
 the

the reader to judge between them. He will find images of the same kind employed; commonly less extended; but thrown forth with a glowing rapidity, which characterizes our poet. “ As autumn’s dark storms pour from
 “ two echoing hills, towards each other ap-
 “ proached the heroes. As two dark streams
 “ from high rocks meet, and mix, and roar
 “ on the plain; loud, rough, and dark in
 “ battle, meet LOCHLIN and INNISFAIL.
 “ Chief mixed his strokes with chief, and
 “ man with man. Steel clanging, founded on
 “ steel. Helmets are cleft on high. Blood
 “ bursts and smokes around: As the troubled
 “ noise of the ocean, when roll the waves on
 “ high; as the last peal of the thunder of
 “ heaven; such is the noise of battle. As
 “ roll a thousand waves to the rock, so
 “ SWARAN’S

“ SWARAN’S host came on ; as meets a rock
 “ a thousand waves, so INNISFAIL met SWA-
 “ RAN ! Death raises all his voices around,
 “ and mixes with the sound of shields. The
 “ field echoes from wing to wing, as a hun-
 “ dred hammers that rise by turns on the red
 “ son of the furnace ! As a hundred winds
 “ on MORVEN ; as the streams of a hundred
 “ hills ; as clouds fly successive over heaven ;
 “ or as the dark ocean assaults the shore of
 “ the desert ; so roaring, so vast, so terrible,
 “ the armies mixed on LENA’S echoing
 “ heath.” In several of these images there
 is a remarkable similarity to HOMER’S ; but
 what follows is superior to any comparison
 that HOMER uses on this subject : “ The
 “ groan of the people spread over the hills ;
 “ it was like the thunder of night, when the
 “ cloud

“ cloud bursts on Cona, and a thousand
 “ ghosts shriek at once on the hollow wind.”
 Never was an image of more awful sublimity
 employed to heighten the terror of the
 battle. Both poets compare the appearance
 of an army approaching, to the gathering of
 dark clouds. “ As when a shepherd,” says
 HOMER, “ beholds from the rock a cloud
 “ borne along the sea by the western wind;
 “ black as pitch it appears from afar, sailing
 “ over the ocean, and carrying the dreadful
 “ storm: He shrinks at the sight, and drives
 “ his flock into the cave: Such under the
 “ AJACES moved on the dark, the thickened
 “ phalanx of the war.”---“ They came,” says
 OSSIAN, “ over the desert like stormy
 “ clouds, when the wind rolls them over the
 “ heath; their edges are tinged with light-
 “ ning;

ning ; and the echoing groves foresee the
 “ storm.” HOMER compares the regular
 appearance of an army, to “ clouds on the
 “ mountain-top, in the day of calmness,
 “ when the strength of the north wind
 “ sleeps.” OSSIAN, with full as much
 propriety, compares the appearance of a dis-
 ordered army, to “ the mountain-cloud,
 “ when the blast hath entered its womb, and
 “ scatters the curling gloom on every side.”
 OSSIAN’S clouds assume a great many forms ;
 and, as we might expect from his climate,
 are a fertile source of imagery to him : “ The
 “ warriors followed their chiefs like the ga-
 “ thering of the rainy clouds behind the red
 “ meteors of heaven.” An army retreating
 without coming to action, is likened to
 “ clouds that, having long threatened rain,

“ retire slowly behind the hills.” The picture of OI-THONA, after she had determined to die, is lively and delicate : “ Her soul was
 “ resolved, and the tear was dried from
 “ her wildly-looking eye. A troubled joy
 “ rose on her mind, like the red path of the
 “ lightning on a stormy cloud.”---HOMER’S
 comparison of ACHILLES to the dog-star is very sublime : “ PRIAM beheld him rushing
 “ along the plain, shining in his armour, like
 “ the star of autumn ; bright are its beams,
 “ distinguished amidst the multitude of stars
 “ in the dark hour of night ! It rises in its
 “ splendor ; but its splendor is fatal, beto-
 “ kening to miserable men the destroying
 “ heat.” The first appearance of FINGAL is, in like manner, compared by OSSIAN to a star or meteor : “ FINGAL, tall in his ship,
 “ stretched

“ stretched his bright lance before him.
 “ Terrible was the gleam of his steel ; it was
 “ like the green meteor of death, setting in
 “ the heath of Malmor, when the traveller is
 “ alone, and the broad moon is darkened in
 “ heaven.”---The hero’s appearance in HO-
 MER is more magnificent ; in OSSIAN, more
 terrible. A tree cut down or overthrown by
 a storm, is a similitude frequent among poets
 for describing the fall of a warrior in battle.
 The most beautiful by far of HOMER’S com-
 parisons, founded on this object, is that on
 the death of EUPHORBUS : “ As the young
 “ and verdant olive, which a man hath rear-
 “ ed with care in a lonely field, where the
 “ springs of water bubble around it ; it is fair
 “ and flourishing ; it is fanned by the breath
 “ of all the winds, and loaded with white blos-

“ foms; when the sudden blast of a whirl-
 “ wind descending, roots it out from its bed,
 “ and stretches it on the dust.” To this, e-
 legant as it is, we may oppose the following
 simile of OSSIAN’s, relating to the death of
 the three sons of USNOTH: “ They fell like
 “ three young oaks that stood alone on the
 “ hill. The traveller saw the lovely trees, and
 “ wondered how they grew so lonely. The
 “ blast of the desert came by night, and laid
 “ their green heads low. Next day he re-
 “ turned, but they were withered, and the
 “ heath was bare.”---MALVINA’s allusion to
 the same object, in her lamentation over Os-
 CAR, is exquisitely tender: “ I was a lovely
 “ tree, in thy presence, OSCAR! with all my
 “ branches round me. But thy death came,
 “ like a blast from the desert, and laid my
 green

“ green head low. The spring returned with
 “ its showers ; but no leaf of mine arose.”---
 Several of OSSIAN’s similes taken from trees,
 are remarkably beautiful, and diversified with
 well-chosen circumstances ; such as that upon
 the death of RYNO and ORLA : “ They have
 “ fallen like the oak of the desert, when it
 “ lies across a stream, and withers in the wind
 “ of the mountains.”---Or that which OSSIAN
 applies to himself : “ I, like an ancient oak in
 “ MORVEN, moulder alone in my place ; the
 “ blast hath lopped my branches away, and
 “ I tremble at the wings of the north.”---As
 HOMER exalts his heroes by comparing them
 to gods, OSSIAN makes the same use of com-
 parisons taken from spirits and ghosts : “ SWA-
 “ RAN roared in battle like the shrill spirit of a
 “ storm, that sits dim on the clouds of Gor-
 “ mal,

mal, and enjoys the death of the mariner.” His people gathered round ERRAGON, “like
 “ storms around the ghost of night, when he
 “ calls them from the top of MORVEN, and
 “ prepares to pour them on the land of the
 “ stranger.”—“ They fell before my son,
 “ like groves in the desert, when an angry
 “ ghost rushes through night, and takes
 “ their green heads in his hand.” In such
 images OSSIAN appears in his strength. Supernatural beings have seldom, if ever, been painted with so much sublimity, and such force of imagination, as by this poet. HOMER, great as he is, must yield to him in similes formed upon these. Take, for instance, the following, which is the most remarkable of the kind in the Iliad: “ME-
 “ RIONES followed IDOMENEUS to battle,
 “ like

“ like MARS, the destroyer of men, when he
 “ rushes to war. Terror, his beloved son,
 “ strong and fierce, attends him, who
 “ fills with dismay the most valiant hero.
 “ They come from Thrace, armed against
 “ the Ephyrians and Phlegyans; nor do they
 “ regard the prayers of either, but dispose of
 “ success at their will.” The idea here is un-
 doubtedly noble : but observe what a figure
 OSSIAN sets before the astonished imagina-
 tion, and with what sublimely terrible cir-
 cumstances he has heightened it : “ He
 “ rushed in the sound of his arms, like the
 “ dreadful spirit of LODA, when he comes
 “ in the roar of a thousand storms, and scat-
 “ ters battles from his eyes. He sits on a
 “ cloud over LOCHLIN’s seas : His mighty
 “ hand is on his sword : The winds lift his
 “ flaming

“ flaming locks. So terrible was CUCMUL-
 “ LIN in the day of his fame.”

“ HOMER’s comparisons relate chiefly to material subjects, to the appearances and motions of armies, the engagement and death of heroes, and the various incidents of war. In OSSIAN we find a greater variety of other subjects illustrated by similes, particularly the songs of bards, the beauty of women, the different circumstances of old age, sorrow, and private distress, which give occasion to much beautiful imagery. Nothing can be more delicate and moving than the following simile of OI-THONA’s, in her lamentation over the dishonour she had suffered: “ Chief of
 “ STRUMON! replied the fighting maid, why
 “ didst thou come over the dark-blue wave

“ to NUATH’s mournful daughter? Why did
 “ not I pass away in secret, like the flower
 “ of the rock, that lifts its fair head unseen,
 “ and strews its withered leaves on the blast?”

—The music of bards is illustrated by a variety of the most beautiful appearances that are to be found in nature. Two similes on this subject I shall quote, because they would do honour to any of the most celebrated classics. The one is, “ Sit thou on the heath, O bard!
 “ and let us hear thy voice; it is pleasant as
 “ the gale of the spring that sighs on the
 “ hunter’s ear; when he awakens from
 “ dreams of joy, and has heard the music of
 “ the spirits of the hill.”—The other contains a short, but exquisitely tender image, accompanied with the finest poetical painting:
 “ The music of CARRIL was like the memo-

“ ry of joys that are past, pleasant and
 “ mournful to the soul. The ghosts of de-
 “ parted bards heard it from SLIMORA’S
 “ side. Soft sounds spread along the wood,
 “ and the silent valleys of night rejoice. ”

“ Besides formal comparisons, the poetry of
 OSSIAN is embellished with many beautiful
 metaphors, such as that fine one applied to
 DEUGALA : “ She was covered with beauty
 “ as with light, but her heart was the house
 “ of pride.” This mode of expression is a
 great enlivener of style. It denotes that glow
 and rapidity of fancy, which, without pausing
 to form a regular simile, paints the object at
 one stroke : “ Thou art to me the beam
 “ of the east rising in a land unknown.”—
 “ In peace, thou art the gale of spring ; in
 “ war,

“ war, the mountain-storm.”—“ Pleasant be
 “ thy rest, O lovely beam ! soon hast thou
 “ set on our hills ! The steps of thy depar-
 “ ture were stately, like the moon on the
 “ blue-trembling wave. But thou hast left
 “ us in darkness, first of the maids of LU-
 “ THA ! Soon hast thou set, MALVINA ! but
 “ thou risest like the beam of the east, a-
 “ mong the spirits of thy friends, where
 “ they sit in their stormy halls, the chambers
 “ of the thunder.” This is correct, and finely
 supported.—OS SIAN’S hyperboles do not
 appear either so frequent or so rash as might
 at first have been looked for. One of the
 most exaggerated descriptions in the whole
 work, is what meets us at the beginning of
 FINOAL, where the scout makes his report
 to CUCHULLIN of the landing of the foe.

But this is so far from deserving censure, that it merits praise, as being on that occasion natural and proper. It is well known that no passion disposes men to hyperbolize more than terror. MORAN, the scout, arrives, trembling and full of fears, and his report is not unlike that which the affrighted Jewish spies made to their leader of the land of Canaan.—In the serious and pathetic scenes of OSSIAN, allegorical characters would have been as much out of place as in tragedy, serving only unseasonably to amuse the fancy, whilst they stopped the current and weakened the force of passion.

“ With apostrophes, or addresses to persons absent or dead, which have been, in all ages, the language of passion, our poets abound;

bounds; and they are among his highest beauties. Witness the apostrophe in the first book of FINGAL, to the maid of INNISTORE, whose lover had fallen in battle; and that of CUCHULLIN to BRAGELA, at the conclusion of the same book. He commands the harp to be struck in her praise; and the mention of BRAGELA's name immediately suggests a croud of tender ideas: "Do'st thou raise thy
 " fair face from the rocks," he exclaims,
 " to find the sails of CUCHULLIN? The sea
 " is rolling far distant, and its white foam
 " shall deceive thee for my sails." And now, his imagination being wrought up to conceive her as, at that moment, in this situation, he becomes afraid of the harm she may receive from the inclemency of the night; and, with an enthusiasm, happy and affecting, though
 beyond

beyond the cautious strain of modern poetry,
 “ Retire,” he proceeds, “ retire ; for it is
 “ night, my love ! and the dark winds sigh in
 “ thy hair. Retire to the hall of my feasts,
 “ and think of the times that are past ; for I
 “ will not return till the storm of war has
 “ ceased. O CONNAL ! speak of war and
 “ arms, and fend her from my mind ; for
 “ lovely with her raven hair is the white-
 “ bosomed daughter of SORGLAN !” This
 breathes all the native spirit of passion and
 tenderness. The apostrophe to the winds,
 in the opening of DARTHULA, is in the high-
 est spirit of poetry ; and is remarkable for the
 resemblance it bears to an expostulation with
 the wood-nymphs, on their absence at a cri-
 tical time ; which, as a favourite poetical
 idea, VIRGIL has copied from THEOCRITUS ;
 and

and MILTON has very happily imitated from both.

“ Having now treated fully of OSSIAN’S talents with respect to description and imagery, it only remains to make some observations on his sentiments. No sentiments can be beautiful without being proper; that is, suited to the character and situation of those who utter them. OSSIAN is, in this respect, as correct as most writers. His characters are, in general, well supported; they speak and act with a propriety of sentiment and behaviour which it is surprising to find in so rude an age. Let the poem of DARTHULA throughout be taken for an example. But, it is not enough that the sentiments be natural and proper. In order to acquire a high degree

degree of poetical merit, they must also be sublime and pathetic. That this character of genius belongs to OSSIAN, may, I think, sufficiently appear from many of the passages I have already had occasion to quote. To produce more instances were superfluous. All the circumstances, indeed, of OSSIAN's composition are favourable to the sublime; more, perhaps, than to any other species of beauty. Amidst the rude scenes of nature, amidst rocks, and torrents, and battles, dwells the sublime. It is the thunder and the lightning of genius. It is the offspring of Nature, not of Art. It is negligent of all the lesser graces, and perfectly consistent with a certain noble disorder. It associates naturally with that grave and solemn spirit which distinguishes our author. For the sublime is an awful and ferious.

ous emotion ; and is heightened by all the images of trouble, and terror, and darkness.

“ Simplicity and conciseness are never-failing characteristics of the style of a sublime writer. He rests on the majesty of his sentiments, not on the pomp of his expressions. The mind rises and swells, when a lofty description or sentiment is presented to it in its native form ; and the main secret of the sublime is, to say great things in few and in plain words ; for every superfluous decoration degrades a sublime idea. Hence the concise and simple style of OSSIAN gives great advantage to his sublime conceptions, and assists them in seizing the imagination with full power. Sublimity, as

belonging to sentiment, coincides, in a great measure, with magnanimity, heroism, and generosity of sentiment. Whatever discovers human nature in its greatest elevation; whatever bespeaks a high effort of soul, or shews a mind superior to pleasures, to dangers, and to death; forms, what may be called *the moral or sentimental sublime*. For this OSSIAN is eminently distinguished. No poet maintains a higher tone of virtuous and noble sentiment throughout all his works. Particularly, in all the sentiments of FINGAL, there is a grandeur and loftiness proper to swell the mind with the highest ideas of human perfection. Wherever he appears, we behold the hero. The objects he pursues are always great; to bend the proud; to protect the injured; to defend his friends; to overcome
 his

his enemies by generosity more than by force. A portion of the same spirit actuates all the other heroes. Valour reigns; but it is a generous valour, void of cruelty, animated by honour, not by hatred. We behold no debasing passions among FINGAL's warriors, no spirit of avarice, or of insult; but a perpetual contention for fame; a desire of being distinguished and remembered for gallant actions; a love of justice, and a zealous attachment to their friends and their country. Such is the strain of sentiment in the works of OSSIAN.

“ But the sublimity of moral sentiments, if they wanted the softening of the tender, would be in hazard of giving a hard and stiff air to poetry. It is not enough to admire. Admiration is a cold feeling, in comparison of that

deep interest which the heart takes in tender and pathetic scenes ; where, by a mysterious attachment to the objects of compassion, we are pleased and delighted even whilst we mourn. With scenes of this kind Ossi-
 AN abounds ; and his high merit in these is incontestable. He may be blamed for drawing tears too often from our eyes ; but, that he has the power of commanding them, I believe no man, who has the least sensibility, will question. The general character of his poetry is, the heroic mixed with the elegiac strain ; admiration tempered with pity. Ever fond of giving, as he expresses it, “ the joy of grief,” it is visible that, on all moving subjects, he delights to exert his genius ; and, accordingly, never were there finer pathetic situations than what his works present. His great art in ma-
 naging

naging them lies, in giving vent to the simple and natural emotions of the heart. We meet with no declamation ; no subtle refinements on sorrow ; no substitution of description in place of passion. OSSIAN felt strongly himself ; and the heart, when uttering its native language, never fails, by powerful sympathy, to affect the heart. A great variety of examples might be produced. We need only open the book to find them every where. The contrast which OSSIAN frequently makes between his present and his former state, diffuses, over his whole poetry, a solemn pathetic air, which cannot fail to make impression on every heart. The conclusion of the songs of SELMA is particularly calculated for this purpose. Nothing can be more poetical and tender, or can leave upon the mind a stronger

stronger and more effecting idea of the venerable aged bard.

“ Upon the whole; if to feel strongly, and to describe naturally, be the two chief ingredients in poetical genius, OSSIAN must, on a fair examination, be held to possess that genius in a high degree. The question is not, Whether a few improprieties may be found in his works? Whether this or that passage might not have been worked up with more art and skill, by some writer of happier times? A thousand such cold frivolous criticisms are altogether indecisive as to his genuine merit. But, Has he the spirit, the fire, the inspiration of a poet? Does he utter the voice of Nature? Does he elevate by his sentiments? Does he interest by his descriptions? Does he paint

paint to the heart as well as to the fancy? Does he make his readers glow, and tremble, and weep? These are the great characteristics of true poetry. Where these are found, he must be a minute critic indeed, who can dwell upon slight defects. A few beauties of this high kind transcend whole volumes of faultless mediocrity. Uncouth and abrupt OSSIAN may sometimes appear, by reason of his conciseness; but he is sublime, he is pathetic, in an eminent degree. If he has not the extensive knowledge, the regular dignity of narration, the fulness and accuracy of description which we find in HOMER and VIRGIL; yet, in strength of imagination, in grandeur of sentiment, in native majesty of passion, he is fully their equal. If he flows not always like a clear stream, yet he breaks forth often like

a torrent of fire. Of art too he is far from being destitute; and his imagination is remarkable also for delicacy as well as strength. Seldom or never is he either trifling or tedious; and, if he be thought too melancholy, yet he is always moral. Tho' his merit were in other respects much less than it is, this alone ought to intitle him to high regard; that his writings are remarkably favourable to virtue. They awake the tenderest sympathies, and inspire the most generous emotions. No reader can rise from him without being warmed with the sentiments of humanity, virtue, and honour."

It was thought proper that so much of the dissertation should accompany this poem, as the Doctor has made it the main subject of his
 remarks;

remarks ; to which it would be no less presuming than superfluous, to make any additions. I would only observe, that if OSSIAN, for all those qualities that conspire to form a poet of the highest order, so the Doctor, as a critic of true taste, elegance, candour, and judgment, bids fair for being known to distant ages.

As Mr M'Pherson's masterly translation is already in the hands of the public, so well known, and so much approved, an apology may perhaps be necessary for offering any other. He indeed has been at uncommon pains, in searching for and gathering these valuable remains of antiquity ; his trouble has been amply repaid, and it may be presumed, that no other, at this day, can have so

large a collection of the originals of OSSIAN'S poems. What pity that this was not sooner thought of, then more might have been collected; how lucky that so many have escaped, and fallen into so good hands.—For my own part, I frankly confess, that I am not possessed of any of the originals; they are to be met with at greater length, and in greater purity, in those parts of the Highlands and isles most remote from Ireland, and farthest north. Yet, in the southern parts of Argyle-shire, I remember, from my infancy, to have been in use to hear fragments of them repeated by old illiterate people, and, as soon as I could judge of any thing, to have been much struck and astonished by particular passages. I now live in an island, not half a day's sailing distant from the north of Ireland,

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the very scene of action in the poem *FINGAL*; yet I could find but few that could rehearse any considerable portion of any of the poems, and that neither complete nor consistent with itself. What I have thus heard, commonly began, and set out well, in the pure and dignified style of *Ossian*, but soon fell off in mean conceits, disgusting absurdities, and ended inconclusively. The traditional stories, however, of these heroes are well known, and abundantly familiar to all ranks in these parts. I have only mentioned this as an adminicle in support of Mr M'Pherson's position, that they are Scots and not Irish poems. The genuine remains are best preserved in the north of Scotland; what are to be met with in the parts next or opposite to Ireland, are less pure, and worse preserved.

The contrary must naturally have been the case, if they had been of Irish origin. This accounts for its being hard to make any valuable collection of these remains, in the parts of the Highlands where it has been my fortune to pass my days. It is however observable, that there is scarce a hill, a heath or vale, where some large stones erected, or other monuments, are not to be met with which tradition always refers to the time of FINGAL; and the vulgar bestow names upon them, alluding to him or some one of his heroes.

As therefore it has been out of my power to come at the genuine originals, so it is not pretended, that what is here offered to the public is a new translation, but a versification

only of what has already appeared and met with such just approbation. Should this be deemed a needless undertaking, I have only to say, that if it has not the charm, it has at least an air of novelty, and that I was willing to contribute my mite towards rendering my favourite OS SIAN more generally known and more universally acceptable to the common run of readers. His beauties, in the present translation, cannot be felt by those who give him only a single or hasty perusal. Being literal, it seems calculated for such only as are possessed of a high refined taste, of much leisure, and somewhat of a peculiar cast.—To many the poems have the appearance of being abrupt, dark, and unconnected. Hence it comes to pass, that many readers of English poetry complain of being disappointed of the

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the satisfaction they looked for in them. Not being able to read them with ease, they found them irksome to such a degree as to surmount their curiosity; and being once discouraged, they have laid them down, scarce read them at all, and have confessed that they never took them up again; so that the difficulty they found in tracing the thread of the narration, has more than counterbalanced all the beauty of expression and sentiment to be met with in the work. This apparent defect is not peculiar to OSSIAN more than other authors, when exhibited in a close and literal version. But as none deals less in the long extended style; as he is rapid and concise even to a degree of abruptness; as, in reading his descriptions, the imagination must be seized at once, or not at all; this objection may be
 allowed

allowed to lie more against him than any other author we are acquainted with. . That there is some room for it, cannot be denied ; and many, in this light-reading age, are found to start it. I remember to have heard one circumstance relative to the manner in which the bards rehearsed the actions of heroes at their entertainments, which .I have not seen taken notice of. Besides those properly called *Bards*, who seem to have been persons much respected, and chosen out of their most eminent families, they had also an inferior class of historians called SCCELLACHA, or narrators of facts, that accompanied the bards. These SCCELLACHA or SENNACHA seem to have had it for their business to relate the least distinguished and minute events and connections of the history of any eminent person,

person, or remarkable transaction among them, while the province of the bards was to put into measure or verse, adapted to the music of the harp, the great lines only, the striking events, and conspicuous parts of the main action, or of the heroes so told or narrated. These were sung, at proper intervals, in concert with the harps. The objects of praise and imitation, of contempt or aversion, were thus pictured forth in the most striking and captivating colours. The passions of the hearers were heightened by the music, and fired by the subject. The pauses betwixt the musical parts were filled up with the minute events, connections, or transactions, related by the SCÉLLACHA. When these came to what was interesting, great, or remarkable, then the bards resumed their part, and dwelt on what

was

was illustrious and distinguished ; while they exerted, at once, all the powers of harmony, all the grandeur of expression, and all the energy of poetic fire. This part of the entertainment seems to bear a resemblance to the modern air and recitative. What was narrative is long ago lost, the measured or poetic part only remaining, as having been easiest for the memory, as well as most worthy of preservation ; and thus have they been transmitted to posterity.

I have met with some old people among the vulgar Highlanders, who, as a winter-evening entertainment, have rehearsed fictions or tales of a very ancient cast, much in the same manner. The gallant or heroic parts were in rhyme or measure, and sung to an

air ; the ludicrous incidents, and such as were little interesting, were only told : thus forming an odd contrast, in which the principal part of the entertainment consisted. Such as are acquainted in the Highlands must know, that ballad-fingers of this sort are yet to be met with. Perhaps I shall be thought to have insisted on this more than it deserves ; but it makes at least a presumption, that there was such a custom of old among the bards ; and that this is but a base imitation of it. It may also partly account for that apparent abruptness and rapidity of transition that occur in the poems of OSSIAN. Hence there is nothing diffuse nor redundant in his manner ; no amplification ; nothing weak, conceited, or puerile ; nothing to load the fancy, to encumber the main image, or render it indistinct. His

poems

poems seem to be an abstract of the history of the times, where only the great events, and distinguished characters, are held forth and dwelt upon. Now, if the recitative part was in any measure supplied ; if these seeming interruptions, or gaps, if I may so call them, were partly filled up, the discouragement, which hinders many to read him in his present English dress, would be removed; the narration would appear less broken, the transitions more easy, and the connection more obvious.

It was with a view to do something in this way that the following versification has been at all attempted. And I would flatter myself, that whatever might tend to make *OSSIAN* better understood, and more generally known,

without making him sink too much from his native dignity and simplicity, should at least meet with indulgence, and not be unacceptable to his most professed admirers.---Measure and verse have only to recommend them that they are more modern, and better adapted to the ear of most English readers of poetry, except of the very few who have acquired a taste for the lofty phrases and cadences of the eastern style. I am well aware that, in a prose-translation of this sort, the stately conciseness, the energy and majesty of *OSSIAN*, are much better preserved than they can be in any kind of verse ; yet to many it is somewhat uncommon, and to some it appears uncouth. When perusing him in such a dress, the ordinary run of readers feel astonishment more than satisfaction ; they are dazzled

dazzled and fatigued rather than pleased. But that a versification of the poems has been generally thought necessary, appears by several essays that have been made towards it. Some of these were harmonious and spirited; and, had the authors executed any large portion of them in the same manner, I must necessarily have been discouraged from this attempt. My endeavour has been to preserve the sense and simplicity of OSSIAN as nearly as possible, by sometimes assuming the paraphrase, tho' very rarely, by throwing in a few things where the connection seemed to me to require it, and thus rendering him clear and easy of apprehension to readers of ordinary capacity and little leisure, without discrediting him with those who have a relish for the higher beauties of poetry. To do him justice

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in this way, would, I confess, demand a genius whose poetical abilities are much superior to mine. The world must now determine how I have succeeded. A person is but an ill judge of his own performances, and the opinion of friends is not always to be trusted. Thro' a benevolent partiality, we are inclined to think favourably of whatever is the production of those whom we esteem. I am, however, happy in the good opinion of some gentlemen of taste, whose judgment, in regard to this publication, could not err by such partiality; and this makes me less anxiously solicitous than I must otherwise have been concerning its fate.

Dr BLACKLOCK, whose judgment I am happy in being authorized to make use of
on

on this occasion, gives me leave to publish it as his opinion, that this versification of FINGAL is a work that may very justly merit the attention of the English reader. To him, and to the friendship and candour of others, whom I am not at liberty to name, I owe many remarks, from which it has received considerable advantages. Upon the whole : If I did not hope that what is now offered, tho' begun and finished amidst employments of a different kind, might something more than atone for its own defects, I would not have obtruded it on the public. All I request is, that my readers may judge for themselves, and, if they find any entertainment, not to think the worse of it for being the performance, as it was the amusement, of one who is rather obscure, and not very ambitious to be known as an author.

F I N G A L:

A

P O E M.

A

THE ARGUMENT.

Cuchullin, general of the Irish tribes in the minority of Cormac king of Ireland, sitting alone beneath a tree, at the gate of Tura, a castle in Ullin or Ulster, is informed of the landing of Swaran king of Lochlin, by Moran the son of Fithil, one of his scouts.—The other chiefs in the mean time were at a hunting party, on Cromla a neighbouring hill.—Cuchullin convenes them, and holds a council; in which disputes run high about giving battle to the enemy.—Connal, the petty king of Togorma, an intimate friend of Cuchullin, was for retreating till Fingal king of the Caledonians, who inhabited the north-west coast of Scotland, should arrive, as his aid had been previously solicited;—but Calmar the son of Matha, lord of Lara, a part of Con-

naught, was for engaging the enemy immediately.—Cuchullin, of himself willing to fight, went into the opinion of Calmar.—Marching towards the enemy, he misse three of his bravest chiefs, Fergus, Duchomar, and Caithbat.—Fergus arriving, tells Cuchullin of the death of the two other chiefs; which introduces the affecting episode of Meina the daughter of Cormac.—The army of Cuchullin is descried at a distance by Swaran, who sends the son of Arno to observe the motions of the enemy, while he ranges his forces in order of battle.—The son of Arno returning to Swaran, describes Cuchullin's chariot, and the terrible appearance of that hero.—The armies engage; but night coming on, leaves the victory undecided.—According to the hospitality of the times, Cuchullin sends to Swaran a formal invitation to a feast, by his bard Carril the son Kinfienna.—Swaran refuses to come.—Carril relates to Cuchullin the story of Grudar and Braffolis.—A party, by

Connal's

Connal's advice, is sent to observe the enemy.—This closes the action of the first day.

The names are poetic.—Cuchullin, or rather Cuth-Ullin, means the voice of Ullster, the person having chief command.—Cairbar means a strong man;—Moran, many;—Fithil or Fili, an inferior bard;—Malmor or Meal-mor, a great hill;—Cath-bait, an eminent warrior or dweller in battle.—Cu-roach means madness of strife;—Connal, mild and fair;—Cru-geal, fair-complexion'd;—Favi, a man that waits opportunity;—Ronnar, choice of men;—Luagher, or Lugha, nimble man;—Calmar, handsome strong man;—Eth, or Aogh, undaunted;—Lena, an extended heath or plain;—Ca-oilt, terror of battle;—Mora, or Stramor, a hill with large sloping sides;—Cu-thon, mournful sound of waves;—Cromla, or Cromleach, a hill over-hanging crooked slopes;—Innit-fail, island

of

of the Fail or Falans, a colony settled of old in Ireland ;
—Erin, the name of Ireland, from ear or iar, west,
and in, an island ;—Lochlin, the Gallic name of Scandi-
navia, meaning literally a sea broke with land and
islands ;—Innistore, or Innistork, island of whales, ancient
name of the Orkneys ;—Dubh-chomer, a black well-sha-
ped man ;—Fear-guth, a man having the chief voice or
command of an army ;—Torman, hollow noise ;—Mor-
na, or Muirna, much esteem'd or cherished ;—Semo, or
Seamh, smooth, determin'd ;—Moina, soft-temper'd,
lovely ;—Sulin-fi-fadda means, far-seeing, far-neighing,
or far leaping ;—Dushron-gheal, black, with white
flarr'd face ;—Sith-aluin, a man very handsome ;—Fiona,
a fair maid ;—Ardan, pride ;—Isle of Mist, the ancient
name for Sky ;—Trenar, man of tried prowess ;—Dor-
glafs, dark gray man ;—Carril, expert in music ;—
Cean-feana, head of the people ;—Cona here is probably
that small river that runs through Glencon in Argyle-
shire,

shire,—*the name means smooth-rolling ford*;—Gru-dar, or Cruai-er, *a man terrible in his rage*;—Golb-bhean, *crooked hill*;—Lubhar, *swift winding, noisy*;—Brafollis, *breast of light*;—Bra-gela, or Bra-geal, *white bosom*;—Sor-glan, *free and generous*.—*The other names that occur are of Danish extraction, and having no affinity to the Gallic, we do not pretend to explain them. —It may not here be improper to remark, once for all, as ghosts flying on clouds and meteors often occur in this poem, that it was long the opinion among the ancient Scots, that a ghost was heard shrieking near the place where a death was to happen soon after. The accounts given to this day among the vulgar of this extraordinary matter, are very poetical. The ghost comes mounted on a meteor, and surrounds twice or thrice the place destined for the person to die, and then goes along the road, through which the funeral is to pass, shrieking at intervals, though with a*

feeble

feeble voice—at last the meteor and ghost disappear above the burial-place.—In the third book, Cuchullin has an apostrophe to a spirit, which is the only passage in the poem that has any appearance of religion—but it is accompanied with a doubt; so that it is not easy to determine, whether the hero meant a superior being, or the ghosts of deceased warriors, who were supposed in those times to rule the storms, and to transport themselves in a gust of wind from one country to another.

F I N G A L.

B O O K I.

BENEATH a tree, with leafy honours crown'd,
 CUCHULLIN sits, the chief in war renown'd ;
 His spear against a mossy rock is laid ;
 His heavier arms upon the grass are spread.
 By TURA's lofty walls, the hero sat,
 Revolving in his mind green ERIN's fate ;
 Careful, concern'd, its danger to prevent,
 Much he inquir'd, and many a message sent ;

As from his faithful friends he succour fought,
And all on CORMAC ran his restless thought.
To his lov'd cause, the hero still divin'd
A dire event, in his presaging mind.
Yet, with a soul resolv'd, and unappall'd,
To guard his throne whenever danger call'd,
He thinks of former conquests in the field,
How oft th' invading foe he forc'd to yield ;
He thinks of mighty CAIRBAR, whom in fight
He lately slew, and drove his friends in flight.
His hopes arise, dispell'd is ev'ry fear,
His heart bounds high, nor dreads th' impending war.

As thus he mus'd, and in his mind forecast
The future danger, and recall'd the past,
Lo ! MORAN, breathless, terror in his face,
The scout of ocean, came with hasty pace.

Arm,

Arm, arm, CUCHULLIN ! thus aloud he cries,
The lofty ships of SWARAN met my eyes ;
I saw their thousands on our coast descend ;
Arise, O Chief ! from LOCHLIN us defend :
Many the heroes from the rolling main,
Throng is the host that pours on ULLIN's plain.

To whom the blue-ey'd Chief thus calm replies :
MORAN ! I see thy terror in thy eyes ;
Thou ever tremblest, and dost now appear
To fill with false reports CUCHULLIN's ear :
But say, have not thy fears increas'd the foe ?
And SWARAN's lofty ships how couldst thou know ?
Perhaps great FINGAL now has cross'd the main,
And comes to aid me on green ULLIN's plain.

Tall as a rock of ice, these eyes beheld
(MORAN thus spake) their chief stride o'er the field ;

His arms shot trembling rays along the strand;
His spear, enormous, in his better hand,
Seem'd like that blasted fir;—his ample shield,
Like the full moon, illumin'd all the field.
Upon a rock he halted, nigh the shore;
His troops, like darken'd clouds, around him pour.
“ Many, O chief of men ! our hands in war,
“ (I said) and ERIN's sons know nought of fear.
“ Thy num'rous host seems train'd to bloody fight,
“ And justly art thou nam'd the man of might.
“ But many mighty men from TURA's walls
“ Are seen—the valiant guard its tow'ring halls.”

As when the founding waves roll round a rock;
His answer, in these words, like thunder broke :
“ Who in this land like SWARAN can appear?
“ Heroes, before me fly, or pant for fear ;

“ Or

“ Or if my force resistleſs they withſtand,
“ They fall to earth beneath my mighty hand.
“ FINGAL alone can ſtrive with me in fight,
“ The king of ſtormy hills ! match me in might.
“ Once did we meet—I know him to my coſt:
“ With what impetuous ſway the ſpear he toſs’d !
“ What vig’rous ſpring was in his arm to throw,
“ The ſword to wield, and riſe at every blow !
“ On ſhady MALMOR’s ſide we wreſtling ſtood,
“ Where, as we ſtrove, our heels o’erturn’d the wood.
“ Rocks trembling fell ; and rivers, with the force,
“ Fled murm’ring from the ſhock, and chang’d their
“ courſe.

“ This dreadful combat three days we renew’d;
“ Heroes o’eraw’d, the ſtrife at diſtance view’d.
“ We met the fourth—nor he nor I will yield,
“ Tho’ FINGAL ſays, I baſely quit the field.—

“ Friends

“ Friends interposing part us in the strife,
“ Which else had ended but with either’s life.—
“ Go, tell CUCHULLIN to avoid with care
“ Th’ impending dangers of a fatal war;
“ Tell the dark Chief he’ll find me in the fight,
“ Strong as the storms that roar round MALMOR’S
“ height.”

Thus SWARAN greets thee from the sounding shore ;
His host round TURA’S halls he straight will pour.
Prevent him, Prince, and meet him in the field,
Or to his haughty terms prepare to yield.

No, said the Chief, I’ll never yield to man ;
I’ll die, or vanquish, on th’ embattled plain ;
In arms I’ll meet this haughty vaunting foe ;
The strength of ERIN LOCHLIN’S sons shall know.—
Now MORAN go, and strike great CAITHBAT’S shield ;
Let war’s hoarse summons sound o’er all the field.

Peace

Peace it disclaims ; its voice is big with fate.
There high it hangs, by TURA's rustling gate.
Go, FITHIL's son, strike with my massy spear ;
My heroes, on the hill, the noise shall hear.

Straight MORAN went and struck the bossy shield ;
The loud alarms soon spread along the field.
The nodding woods re-echo all around ;
The rocks and hills repeat the direful sound.
Deer, by the lake of roes, start at the noise ;
The heroes listen to the warning voice.
Their hearts at once are fill'd with martial fires ;
The hoarse-resounding shield each Chief inspires !
They answer to the call, they quit the chace,
And down the steep they rush with hasty pace.—
Young CURAOCH first upon the plain appears,
Graceful in arms, and brave beyond his years.

Next

Next valiant CONNAL issues from the wood,
Whose spear was often bath'd in hostile blood.
The son of FAVI leaves the dark-brown hind;
CRUGAL, with breast of snow, was not behind.
Said RONNAR, " Sure the shield of war I hear."
" It is (said LUGHAR) great CUCHULLIN's spear.
" Son of the sea ! put on thy rattling mail.
" CALMAR ! arise, and lift thy sounding steel !
" PUNO ! thou horrid hero, arm for fight !
" CAIRBAR ! come down from CROMLA's woody height !
" O ETH ! thy white knee thou must quickly bend,
" And to the war from LORA's streams descend.
" CAOLT ! appear in all thy martial pride,
" O'er MORA's whistling heath stretch thy fair side ;
" Thy side that's white as foaming waves that roar
" Round CUTHON's murm'ring rocks, and lash the
" shore."

Methinks the Chiefs I see, in armour bright,
Rush to the plain, impatient for the fight.
Their former deeds their panting breasts inflame;
They kindle with the hopes of future fame.
From their bright sides of steel the lightnings play;
Their mighty hands upon their swords they lay.
Like mountain-streams, when swell'd by sudden rain,
Each from his hill rush'd roaring to the plain;
Each hero urges his companion on;
Each in his father's glitt'ring armour shone;
Behind each chief, his gloomy men appear,
Ready in arms, and breathing mortal war.
So when red meteors fly o'er heav'n's wide plain,
The dark clouds follow, threat'ning storm and rain.

And now, each party gather'd, all the fields
Are bright with shining swords, and flaming shields,

Which dart against the sun with equal rays,
Each diff'rent tribe reflecting blaze on blaze:
Their clashing armour yields a dreadful sound,
And rocking CROMLA echoes all around.
By intervals, the war-song o'er the plain
Unequal bursts ;—the gray dogs howl between.
As mist in autumn shades the lofty hills,
And all the vales with low-hung vapours fills,
Broken and dark ;—at length it settles high,
And lifts its head along the azure sky ;
Thus rush the heroes, and their pow'rs unite;
Thus dark they threaten, and demand the fight.
On LENA's dusky heath, as thus they stood,
Gloomy in arms, and breathing war and blood,
CUCHULLIN to them came ;—bright o'er his breast
Rattl'd the mail.—The chiefs he thus address'd :



Health to ye, princes of each narrow vale ;
Ye hunters of the savage herd, all hail !
Another sport more manly now draws near
Than chacing o'er the heath the dark-brown deer.
The foe has come far o'er the swelling main,
To pour destruction on green ULLIN'S plain.
From LOCHLIN'S snow-clad hills appears the host,
Like rolling waves that roar along our coast.
Say, shall we meet them on th' embattled field ;
Or INNISFAIL'S gay plains to LOCHLIN yield?
Shall we not fight them in the strife of swords,
Rather than bend to haughty foreign lords ?
Speak, sons of war ! the danger loudly calls,
And the fierce foes in arms approach our walls.
Thou, CONNAL, first of men ! before the rest
Unfold thy mind. In thy undaunted breast
Love of thy country, rooted deep, remains ;
The blood of heroes runs thro' all thy veins.



Say, breaker of the shields ! who oft hast try'd
The sons of LOCHLIN, and their strength defy'd,
Shall we not meet them in the shock of war ?
Wilt thou not forth, and lift thy father's spear ?

CONNAL, with air sedate, throws round his eyes,
And to CUCHULLIN calmly thus replies :
I've often toil'd in the rough front of war,
And thro' the hostile ranks keen flew my spear.
I'm always 'mong the foremost to engage,
Where throng the valiant, where the mighty rage.
But, tho' this sword has oft in battle shone,
And tho' this arm has many trophies won,
This day I would advise from war to cease,
My heart this day is for green ERIN's peace.
All LOCHLIN's sons have pour'd upon our land
From SWARAN's sable ships ; they crowd the strand.

Behold !

Behold ! his tow'ring fleet in all its pride,
And streaming gallies in our harbours ride ;
Throng as the num'rous reeds of LEGO's lake,
Along our coasts, his masts tall-bending shake ;
Like forests tall, they seem, with heads on high ;
The misty clouds about their summits fly.

FINGAL, whose force, impetuous in the field,
Scatters whole hosts, and makes the mighty yield ;
Whose arm resistless marks its way with death,
As stormy winds that rage along the heath,
Or rapid streams that roar thro' echoing vales,
When cloudy night o'er all the hills prevails ;
Ev'n FINGAL's self, whose fame is spread afar,
Would rather shun than now provoke the war.

Then CALMAR, MATHA's son, inflam'd with ire,
Thus spake :—Thou Chief of peace, do thou retire !

Fly, CONNAL ;—to thy silent hills repair,
Where never yet was heard the sound of war.
Go where thy days in slothful ease may run,
Where the bright spear of battle never shone.
Forfaking honour, and renouncing fame,
Do thou, thy friends, thy king, and country, shame.
Go, chace the dark-brown deer on CROMLA's brow,
O'er LENA's heath pursue the bounding roe:
Be these thy safer sports in TURA's shade ;
Leave war to us who know the martial trade.
Arms are our bus'ness ; ERIN is our care ;
We'll reap those glories which thou dar'st not share.
But haste, CUCHULLIN, gen'rous SEMO's son !
Against th' invading foe straight lead us on.
Let's drive dark LOCHLIN's sons around the shore,
And thro' their ranks of pride, triumphant, roar.
Our keen-edg'd swords will quickly hew a way,
Thro' their thick body, and their dark array.

No ship shall dare, again, from INNISTORE,
Bound o'er the rolling waves to ULLIN's shore.
Ye winds of ERIN ! rise with furious breath ;
Ye whirlwinds ! loudly roar along the heath ;
Aloft, ye tempests ! tofs me in the sky,
And by a sudden death let CALMAR die ;
Torn in a cloud, by angry ghosts of men,
And piecemeal scatter'd o'er green ULLIN's plain ;
If e'er I joy'd in hunting o'er the fields
So much as in the founding strife of shields.

To whom thus CONNAL, answ'ring slowly, said :
O MATHA's son, thou know'st, I never fled.
Tho' CONNAL does not boast a mighty name,
Yet with my friends I always strove for fame.
In ERIN's cause I've oft expos'd my life ;
Nor was I last to mingle in the strife.

When

When herpes fought, did I the danger shun ?

Was not the battle in my presence won ?

CALMAR ! thy warmth misleads thee ; sure thine eyes

Will witness for me what thy tongue denies.

But, son of SEMO ! to the present state

Of our affairs, and of this high debate.

When thus with ships the beach is cov'ed o'er,

And SWARAN's host thus blackens all the shore,

Since one defeat will bring us down so low,

As never more in arms to meet the foe ;

Best leave the fortune of the field untry'd,

Nor rashly in our friends, so few, confide.

Regard the honour of our ancient throne,

And treat of terms of peace, to save the crown.

The peace of heroes cannot thee disgrace.

Give half the land, and store of wealth, for peace.

I am for peace, O Chief ! it suits our state.

Few are our friends—let us not tempt our fate,

Till mighty FINGAL lands on ULLIN's coast,
To strive in field with SWARAN's num'rous host.
But if thou choosest now to mix in war,
Ready am I to lift the sword and spear.
Where thickest squadrons rage is my delight ;
And my soul brightens in the gloom of fight.

CUCHULLIN then :—I most approve his voice
Who spoke for war ; grim battle is my choice ;
I joy to mingle in the dire alarms,
When honour calls, and hear the din of arms.
Pleasant as thunder that betokens rain,
When smiling Spring bedecks green ULLIN's plain.—
And now let all the shining tribes appear
By turns, and let me view my sons of war ;
Let them in order move along the heath,
Prepar'd in arms for conquest, or for death,

Dazzling, as shines the sun before a storm,
When gath'ring clouds the face of heav'n deform,
Thro' MORVEN's oaks when western winds do roar,
And roll the waves along the echoing shore.
But all my valiant heroes are not here;
I miss my brave companions of the war.
White-bosom'd CAITHBAT does not meet my sight;
Nor bold DUCHOMAR, who consumes the fight.
Does FERGUS too forsake me on this day,
When threats the storm of foes in dread array?
He was the first in honour at our feast,
And on his aid I did securely rest.
But sure that's he that from the hill descends,
And, as a bounding hart, his course here bends;
As a young roe from MALMOR's steepy height,
Thus FERGUS springing rushes on our sight.
Haill! ROSSA's son! so late why dost appear,
Thou arm of death! what shades the soul of war?

My sighs, he says, are for the mighty dead,
And o'er the valiant are my sorrows shed—
Fall'n are our friends—on CAITHBAT's mould'ring
grave,

Four mossy stones arise, near TURA's cave.
These hands DUCHOMAR in the dust have laid,
Who like a rock the stream of battle staid.
CAITHBAT, thou son of TORMAN ! bright in war
Thou wast, as sun-beams on our hills appear.
Dark was DUCHOMAR midst th' embattl'd train,
Fatal as mist on LANO's marshy plain ;
Silent and gloomy it moves o'er the heath,
In its slow course the people sink in death.
Thou MORNA too art stretch'd in the cold grave !
Calm is thy sleep within thy rocky cave.
By death arrested in thy rosy bloom,
Fairest of maids ! thou'lt sunk into the tomb ;

Thou'lt fall'n in darknefs, like a shooting ftar,
That o'er the defert for a while fhines clear,
Then finks at once with fading tranfient light,
And leaves the lonely trav'ler hid in night.

To whom the blue-ey'd Chief:—Young warrior! tell,
How dy'd the lovely, how the mighty fell?
Were they engag'd with LOCHLIN's fons in fight?
Were they o'erpower'd by their fuperior might?
The caufe, O Chief! hafte thee to let us know,
Why ERIN's fons are in the duft laid low?

Then FERGUS thus:—Beneath a fpreading oak,
By BRANNO's flowing ftream, with furious flock
The heroes met in fight—for MORNA's love,
Fair CORMAC-CAIRBAR's daughter, thus they ftrove;
(But TORMAN's fon was lovely in her eye,
And of her foul he was the fecret figh);

Til

Till then strict friends—but friendship now gave way
To jealous rage—they fought in bloody fray.—
Long time the Chiefs an equal strife maintain ;
CAITHBAT at length is stretch'd upon the plain.
His rival kill'd ; in haste DUCHOMAR came
To TURA's cave, where staid the beauteous dame,
And to her spoke :—O blest with ev'ry grace !
Thou lovely branch of CORMAC-CAIRBAR's race !
Why MORNA in the rocky cave alone ?
What stays thee here, within the circling stone ?
Here only murm'ring streams run hoarsely by,
And dark clouds gath'ring blacken all the sky :
Nor can that troubled lake afford delight ;
How cruel here to hide thy beauty bright ?
As new-fall'n snow upon the heath, thou'rt fair ;
Like CROMLA's floating mist, thy flowing hair,
When thro' its folds bright shine the western rays,
As round the verdant hills it curling plays.

Like

Like two smooth rocks, round which the waters glide,
From BRANNO seen, thy heaving breasts divide;
Thy snowy arms in just proportion fall,
Like two white pillars in great FINGAL's hall.

Whence art thou now? the white-arm'd maid reply'd;
Why higher com'st? thou gloomy son of pride!
Why do thy brows such fullen horrors wear?
And thy red-rolling eyes, why fiercely stare?
Why flush'd thy cheek, why heaves thy throbbing heart?
What dreadful tidings hast thou to impart?
Is SWARAN's fleet arriv'd? what of the foe?
Say, dark DUCHOMAR! if thou aught dost know.

From hunting of the dark-brown deer, he said,
I from the hill return, thou lovely maid!
Three have I slain with my tough-bending yew;
Three more in chace my panting dogs o'erthrew.

Aside

Afide for thee a beamy stag I've laid ;
Fleet were his feet, and high his branchy head.
O maid of CORMAC-CAIRBAR's noble race !
Long has my heart been ravish'd with thy grace ;
There do thy beauties reign without controul ;
I love thee, MORNA ! as my very soul.
Accept this slender token of my love ;
Let future services my passion prove.

To whom the maid thus calm reply'd ;—In vain
Thy proffer'd gifts to me ; thy flatt'ring strain,
DUCHOMAR, gloomy man ! I can't approve
Thy odious suit, nor listen to thy love.
Hard is thy rocky heart, and dark thy brow ;
Yet freely, whom I love, I'll here avow.
The blooming CAITHBAR only does inspire
My heart with love, and feels a mutual fire.

When

When I behold him, all things gay appear ;
My soul rejoices, and forgets each care.
Thus, from the cloud-cap'd hills the sun's bright ray
Scatters the darkness, and restores the day.
Well is he skill'd in chacing of the deer ;
And lovely does he on his hills appear.
This day he early rose, intent on sport,
And with his train did to the woods resort.
Saw'st thou young CAITHBAT at the early chace,
The son of TORMAN, with the ruddy face ?
Here he his faithful MORNA was to meet ;
Here I impatient for his coming wait.

And long shall MORNA stay, DUCHOMAR said.
His blood is smoking on my trusty blade ;
Long shalt thou wait for him, and wait in vain ;
By me, in equal combat, he was slain.

The youth to me thy beauties would not yield.
By BRANNO'S stream we fought—he prefs'd the field.
On CROMLA'S side I'll raise the hero's tomb ;
His mournful friends may thither weeping come.
Good cause hast thou to mourn th' ill-fated Chief ;
But comfort take, and give not way to grief :
Soon will thy beauties raise the soft alarms,
'Mong heroes worthy of thy blooming charms.
For thee I undertook this fatal strife ;
For thee it was I robb'd my friend of life :
On me then, fairest maiden ! fix thy love ;
Daughter of CORMAC ! of my suit approve.
DUCHOMAR will protect thee from all harm ;
Strong as a storm in battle is his arm.

Fall'n is the son of TORMAN ? thus replies,
The grief-struck dame, with sorrow-streaming eyes.

Is he thus snatch'd by an untimely death,
And sudden sunk on his own echoing heath ?
The blooming hero with the breast of snow,
To ocean's strangers was a deadly foe ;
Where was his equal at the bounding chace ?
Among the ruddy youth, so fair, what face ?
CAITHBAT ! than whom CUCHULLIN's valiant host,
A milder air, nor bolder heart cou'd boast.
Gloomy DUCHOMAR ! thou art dark indeed ;
Thou only cou'dst commit so foul a deed.
Cruel ! when CAITHBAT by thine arm lies slain,
To think that I wou'd listen to thy strain.
How cou'dst thou hope to have thy suit approv'd,
Thus red from slaughter of the man I lov'd ?
Give me that sword yet reeking with his gore ;
On CAITHBAT's blood let me my sorrows pour ;

The

The sword he gave—silent the maid appears,
Bathing the blood-stain'd blade with streaming [tears.
Wildly she star'd around, with grief oppress'd,
Then starting, plung'd it in his manly breast,
As falls a river-bank with echoing sound,
So sunk DUCHOMAR bleeding to the ground.
Panting as thus he lay, unto the maid
His arm he stretched out, as thus he said :

Hard recompence of love thou here dost show !
MORNA ! thy hand has laid DUCHOMAR low.
I die—red in the life-blood of its lord,
Cold at my heart, I feel the pointed sword.
My breathless body let fair MORNA have ;
With tears she'll lay it in the silent grave.
She lov'd DUCHOMAR—that dark son of fame
Was of her peaceful night the pleasing dream.

When hunters on the heath my tomb shall see,
They'll speak his praise who fell for loving thee.
The steel is cold—I long to be at rest—
In pity, MORNA, draw it from my breast.—

Graceful in sorrow went the weeping maid,
As from his breast she drew the reeking blade.
One last effort th' expiring hero try'd,
And plung'd his poinard in her snowy side.
She falls—her yellow hair is spread around—
The lukewarm blood throng bursting from the wound
Stains her white arms—with pain she draws her breath;
And Nature startles at approaching death.
Rolling she lay, and gasping short, she dy'd;
To her last groans the cave re-echo'd wide.

Fatal effects of love! CUCHULLIN said.
Peace to the heroes souls! too soon they're dead.

In former dangers I have ever known
Their zeal, and valiant deeds in battle shown.
Now let them round me on the clouds appear,
Thence show their manly features breathing war ;
So shall they rouse and fire my soul for fight ;
So shall my arm like thunder prove in might.
Let MORNA on a moon-beam hover near
The window of my rest, and bright appear,
When foes no longer kindle fierce alarms,
And hush'd to peace is the rude din of arms.
Now let the tribes, in thick embattl'd train,
Gather their strength, and move along the plain.
Tow'rd's LOCHLIN's sons, my founding car attend,
And charge undaunted where my course I bend.
Let glitt'ring spears beam dreadful from my car;
Spears that have often shone in ERIN's war,
Follow the bounding of my foaming steeds.
'Gainst the throng foe, ye Chiefs !—CUCHULLIN leads.

Be mindful of the race from whence you came,
And emulate, in arms, your father's fame.
'Your king, your houses, and your fertile lands,
All you hold dear, is now within your hands.
Only stand firm, the vict'ry is our own ;
When back'd by you, no dangers will I shun.
Soon thro' the foe we'll cut an ample way ;
My soul will brighten in the gloomy fray.
When round my blazing steel the battle low'rs,
Amidst the armed files of LOCHLIN's pow'rs,
Strong in his friends, CUCHULLIN, o'er the field,
Their ranks will scatter, and constrain to yield.

As when a stream of foam, from CROMLA's steep,
Pours its white waters, roaring, to the deep ;
Rolls o'er the rocks, with headlong rapid force,
And thro' the vales precipitates its course :

When

When thunder rolls, and clouds descend in rain,
And dark-brown night is spread o'er half the plain :
So fierce, so vast, so terrible appear,
The sons of ERIN, rushing to the war.
Full in the van, conspicuous to the sight,
CUCHULLIN bounds, exulting in his might.
The whale of Ocean thus triumphant rides,
Amidst the rage of storms and rushing tides ;
His billows follow where he leads the way,
The foam he dashes, and confounds the sea :
Provok'd, his valour forth, as streams, he pours,
Rolling his might along the sounding shores.

The dreadful noise approaching, SWARAN hears,
As winter-storms resounding in his ears.
He orders, straight, to strike his bossy shield,
And calls the son of ARNO o'er the field.

What

What noise, said he, thus rolls along the hills,
As found of gather'd flies, or murm'ring rills ?
So GORMAL echoes to the rolling flood ;
So rustling winds roar in the distant wood ;
When gloomy tempests gather in the skies,
Before the white tops of my waves arise.
Haste, ARNO's son ! and climb that mountain's brow
See if thou canst discern the coming foe ;
Lest INNISFAIL's dark sons their course here bend,
And o'er the heath to sudden fight descend.

He went ;—he spy'd the foe ;—nor long he staid,
But swift return'd, all trembling and dismay'd.
His eyes roll widely round ; his mouth gapes wide ;
High bounds his lab'ring heart against his side :
Fear-struck ; when near at hand he saw the foe,
His words are interrupted, fault'ring, slow.

SWARAN ! thou Chief of dark-brown shields ! arise.
Arm, arm, thou son of Ocean ! thus he cries.
The mountain-stream of battle waves afar,
ERIN's deep-moving strength demands the war.
The sons of INNISFAIL, along the heath,
Like gath'ring clouds approach, and threaten death.
Swift, as a meteor gliding thro' the air,
Thus flaming high comes on the rapid car ;
The car of battle, tow'ring to the fight,
Where sits the mighty Chief, renown'd in fight.
To war he comes, exulting in his force ;
Dreadful in arms, resistless in his course.
As waves behind a rock appears from far,
Or mist along the heath, his bending car ;
Its sides emboss'd with stones are sparkling bright,
As shines the sea around the boat of night ;
Of smoothest bone, its seat is fair to view ;
Its mighty beam is form'd of polish'd yew ;

Stor'd are its gleaming sides with rattling spears ;
Footstool of heroes sam'd in ERIN's wars
Is its strong bottom :—Thro' th' embattl'd plain
It rolls destruction on the hostile train.

Before the car, upon the right, is seen
The strong, proud-pawing courser of the plain.
High-man'd, broad-chested, is the snorting horse ;
The ground he swallows in his thund'ring course ;
And as his flowing mane he-waves on high,
It seems a stream of smoke along the sky.
Bright, smooth, and glossy, is each shining side ;
Majestic on he moves, in martial pride ;
Rushes, undaunted, to the field of fame ;
SULIN-SIFADDA is his well-known name.
Not less impetuous in his founding course,
Upon the left, is seen the snorting horse :

His

His mane, dark-waving, o'er his shoulders flies;
His bright-starr'd head he tosses to the skies;
Strong hoof'd, and fleet, he shakes the trembling ground
He champs the bit, and throws his foam around;
Conscious of freedom, scorns the strait'ning rein;
His name DUSRONNAL, 'mong the warrior-train.
A thousand thongs bind high the rapid car,
Which brings the leader of young CORMAC's war;
Hard-polish'd bits thro' wreaths of foam shine bright;
The gorgeous trappings cast a splendid light:
Smooth radiant reins the stately steeds bedeck,
Thin thongs inlaid with gems bend round each neck:
The steeds, with headlong pace and loosen'd reins,
Like wreaths of mist, fly o'er the streamy plains;
Wildness of deer they in their course display,
The eagle's strength descending on her prey:
Their noise, as on they rush with uncheck'd pride,
Like winter-blasts on GORMAL's snowy side.

The dauntless Chief is seen within the car,
Who, strong as storms, confounds the ranks of war :
CUCHULLIN is the mighty hero's name,
The son of generous SEMO known to fame.
His stature tall, and graceful to the view ;
His ruddy cheek is like my polish'd yew :
Beneath his dark-arch'd brow, his rolling eye
Darts terrors forth, from which the valiant fly ;
And as he forward bends to wield the spear,
Like flame flies from his head his waving hair.
Fly, son of Ocean ! o'er your seas again,
CUCHULLIN, like a storm, rolls o'er the plain.

To whom, incens'd, thus SWARAN made reply :
Chief of the little soul ! when did I fly ?
O ARNO's son ! thou'rt fill'd with groundless fears
When fled I from the strife of many spears ?

Why thus unforc'd should I so tamely yield ;
And, ere the fight begins, resign the field ?
The storms that roar round GORMAL I have try'd ;
The foaming billows, and their force, defy'd :
I've met the raging tempests of the sky ;
And from a single hero shall I fly ?
Not FINGAL's self, were FINGAL to appear,
Wou'd awe my soul, or darken it with fear,
Arise ! my thousands, to the battle's roar !
Fierce as the echoing main around me pour !
Where waves my steel, throng gather on the strand,
Impregnable as rocks on LOCHLIN's land !
My rocks, that meet with joy the swelling floods,
And to the winds stretch forth their shady woods.

And now 'twixt host and host, in dread array,
Small space was left ere join'd in bloody fray.

Dark,

Dark, as when Autumn's storms dispute on high,
From echoing hills, the empire of the sky ;
Before their troops, exulting in their might,
The heroes 'gainst each other rush to fight.

As o'er high rocks dark streams their course maintain,
And meet, and mix, and roar upon the plain ;
LOCHLIN and ERIN thus their squadrons drew ;
Loud, rough, and dark, to battle thus they flew :
High blaze their swords, and loud their shields re-
found ;

With furious shock they shake the solid ground.
Dire was the onset of each gloomy van ;
Chief mix'd his strokes with Chief, and man with man ;
'Gainst steel steel clash'd ; helmets are cleft on high ;
Swords o'er the plain in flaming splinters fly ;
Spears launch'd from far, beam with a transient light,
As meteors gild the stormy face of night.

From

From twanging bows throng show'rs of arrows fly,
And clouds of darts obscure the liquid sky.
Blood flows in streams, and smokes the field around;
And heaps of bodies raise the level ground.

Loud as a whirlwind, rushing to the shore
From the mid ocean, drives the waves before;
As peals of thunder shake the distant poles;
So loud, so deep, the noise of battle rolls.
Tho' CORMAC's hundred tuneful bards were there,
To give to Fame the fortune of the war;
Feeble their hundred voices, faint their lay,
To tell the labours of that well-fought day :
Such streams of blood were spilt on either side;
So many slaughter'd heroes swell'd the tide.

Ye sons of Song ! lament in mournful strain,
Noble SITHALIN stretch'd upon the plain !

O'er the dark heath let FIONA vent her sighs,
For her lov'd ARDAN, let her sorrows rise :
By SWARAN's mighty hand these sunk in death,
As two young hinds extended on the heath ;
Where, 'midst the roar of thousands, he engag'd,
Like the shrill spirit of a storm enrag'd,
That sits enthron'd in clouds on GORMAL's height,
And sees the sailors perish with delight.

A share no less the son of SEMO takes
In the dire fray, nor less destruction makes.
Thro' adverse foes he hews an ample way
With his bright sword, which sheds a streamy ray,
Which mows down ranks, and makes the mighty yield
Keen as the light'nings flash along the field ;
When people by its breath are blasted found,
And all the woody hills are burning round.

The

These his spear reaches, over those he rolls
His rapid car, and crushes out their souls.
Where'er he drives in his impetuous course,
The scatter'd squadrons bend before his force.
His snorting horses, heedless of the reins,
O'er slaughter'd heroes scow'r along the plains;
Their hoofs are bath'd in blood, and as they bound,
The gore and mingling dust are spread around.
Thund'ring he drives, and wheresoe'er he goes,
He leaves behind a lane of slaughter'd foes.
With sudden blasts thus spirits of the night
The lofty groves o'erturn from CROMLA's height.

Now may'st thou mourn, O maid of INNISTORE!
The youth thou lov'dst lies bleeding on the shore:
Mix with the waves thy tears, the wind thy sighs!
Bid the loud sorrows o'er the rocks arise:

Let thy fair form, while thus thou dost complain,
Be seen low-bending o'er the rolling main,
As looks a mountain spirit from on high,
That on a sun-beam glides along the sky,
And bright appears to view, when silence reigns,
At noon-tide hour, on MORVEN'S verdant plains.
The lovely youth, the cause of all thy wo,
Beneath CUCHULLIN'S pow'rful arm lies low :
From the bleak shore he never more shall rise,
Nor from the strife of heroes glad thine eyes ;
No more, relying on his martial fame,
To royal blood alliance shall he claim.
Now may'st thou weep, O maid of INNISTORE !
The brave, the blooming TRENAR is no more.
His dogs at home lament their master lost,
As howling they behold his passing ghost ;
His heath of hinds no more his voice shall know ;
Within his hall, unstrung, is seen his bow.

As roll a thousand waves against a rock,
SWARAN's dark host advanc'd with furious shock.
As meets a rock a thousand foaming waves,
So INNISFAIL the shock of LOCHLIN braves :
With force unbated, each maintains the field,
And hearts are pierc'd unknowing how to yield :
With spears afar, with swords at hand, they strike ;
And zeal of slaughter fires their souls alike.
Death all his dreadful voices raises round ;
The clanging arms and shields increase the sound.
Each Chiel's a darken'd pillar full of ire,
And in his hand the sword a beam of fire.
The field re echoes wide from wing to wing ;
Each host with storms of strokes does mutual ring,
Thus on the hissing steel, when blows go round,
An hundred hammers fall with thund'ring sound.

Lo ! these two Chiefs, on LENA's waving heath
That low'ring meet, with looks denouncing death,
And rush against each other to the war !
As two dark clouds, encount'ring, they appear ;
Their swords like light'ning flaming to and fro,
In mortal battle, dealing blow for blow ;
Direful the shock ! when hand to hand they meet,
Trembles the hollow ground beneath their feet.
The little hills are troubled all around,
The shores and moss-grown rocks repeat the sound ;
'Tis SWARAN there, and great CUCHULLIN here,
Their anxious hosts behold the strife with fear.
Shrill shouts and clamours ring on either side ;
As hope and dread their panting hearts divide ;
While dim the Chiefs upon the heath engage,
With equal force and unextinguish'd rage ;
Till sudden night descending from the skies,
In clouds conceals them from their wond'ring eyes.

Then

Then ERIN's valiant sons in haste repair
To CROMLA's shaggy side, and breathe from war.
The dark-brown deer, by DORGLASS in that place
Were left, the early fortune of the chace,
Which on that day were by the heroes slain,
Ere LOCHLIN's sons arriv'd on ULLIN's plain.
Thro' CROMLA's groves the axes loud resound,
Firs fall from high, tall oaks are spread around.
Some th' unwieldy weight of trunks receive,
Which others take, and with their wedges cleave.
The piles are rais'd, the crackling sparks expire;
Ten heroes then blow up and fan the fire.
The kindling wood far round its beams displays,
The neighb'ring hills are brighten'd with the blaze.
Forgetful of their toils, and stretch'd at ease,
They now prepare their hunger to appease;
Some strip the skin, some portion out the spoil;
Some on the fire the reeking entrails broil :

An hundred youths collect the ready heath ;
They dig the pit, lay polish'd stones beneath :
'Three hundred choose them with impatient haste ;
The fire below prepares the sweet repast :
Each for his friends did ample stores provide,
The feast, in order laid, is smoking wide.

Then, as with eager appetite they dine,
And cheer themselves with venison and wine,
The great CUCHULLIN, Chief of ERIN's war,
Resum'd his mighty soul, and on his spear
Half-leaning stood—to CARRIL he address'd
The gen'rous thoughts that glow'd within his breast :
CARRIL ! CEANFEANA's son, the gray-hair'd bard,
Whose strains, in former times, with joy were heard.

Shall I, alone, enjoy this ample store,
While LOCHLIN's king remains on ULLIN's shore ;

Far from the deer that on his hills are found ;
Far from the halls that with his feasts resound ?
CARRIL, of other times ! arise, and bear
My friendly message to great SWARAN'S ear :
Tell him that came far o'er the rolling main,
To waste with hostile arms fair ULLIN'S plain :
Tell him, that here CUCHULLIN gives his feast,
And bid him hither come a welcome guest :
Here safe he may repose till morning's light ;
My sounding groves to rest will him invite :
For cold and bleak he feels on the bare coast
The winds by which his foamy seas are toss'd :
Here let him praise the lightly-trembling string,
And hear my bards the deeds of heroes sing.

CARRIL with softest voice went tow'ards the shore,
And to the King of Shields his message bore :

Arise !

Arise ! and leave the dark skins of thy chace,
O King of Groves ! I bring the words of peace :
CUCHULLIN now enjoys the genial feast,
To which he thee invites a welcome guest :
The strength of shells goes round—he bids thee share
The feast of heroes, and the songs of war.

Before a storm, as CROMLA's hollow noise,
Thus SWARAN answer'd with a fullen voice :
Tho' INNISFAIL's fair daughters bade me go,
And to embrace me stretch'd their arms of snow ;
Tho' all on me should roll love-darting eyes ;
And all their heaving breasts to tempt me rise,
Yet here on ULLIN's shore I shou'd remain,
Fix'd as my rocks that brave the sounding main ;
'Till in the east appear the morning-ray,
That joins our low'ring host in bloody fray.

The earliest beam shall find me on the heath,
And light my steps to dark CUCHULLIN's death.
It is with joy that LÖCHLIN's wind I hear;
Its rushing blast is music to my ear :
As whistling thro' my lofty shrouds it roars;
And drives my foaming waves on ULLIN's shores ;
It calls my waving forests to my mind,
GÖRMAL's green woods, that often to the wind
Have echo'd, when amidst the sylvan war,
In the fierce boar I've plung'd the bloody spear:
But tell CUCHULLIN to resign the field,
And CORMAC's ancient throne to SWARAN yield;
This well-try'd faulchion else shall reach his heart,
Or his last spirit smoke upon my dart ;
The swelling torrents, purple with his blood,
Shall o'er the mountains roll a crimson flood.

CARRIL this heard, return'd without delay ;
Swift o'er the heath he trode his former way ;
With pensive looks his aged course he bends,
To where CUCHULLIN feasted with his friends ;
And, sad, he says, the answer which I bring ;
Sad are the words of LOCHLIN's haughty king ;
SWARAN vouchsafes not of thy feast to share,
But threatens vengeance, slaughter, and grim war.

Then smiling thus, the blue-ey'd Chief reply'd :
And let him threat, that gloomy son of pride !
And sad and fatal to himself alone
Become th' event—success our arms may crown.
To his throng host we did not tamely yield ;
Nor were we first to quit th' ensanguin'd field ;
Tho' not with equal numbers we engag'd,
With equal fortune yet the war is wag'd.

Glory the prize, we'll still perform our parts
With manly force, and with undaunted hearts.
Just is our cause—we fight for CORMAC's throne ;
Our hopes must center on ourselves alone :
If sense of honour, and if souls secure
Of native worth, that can all test endure,
Can promise aught, or on themselves rely,
Greatly to dare, to conquer, or to die ;
Tho' few, sustain'd by these, we yet may meet
Dark LOCHLIN's troops, and promise their defeat
Conquest in such a cause our arms will crown ;
Ours be the danger, ours the high renown.
Some friends, tho' distant, we have yet in store ;
Great FINGAL soon may land on ULLIN's shore.
'Twas SWARAN this destructive war began ;
He first may fall in fight, vain-glorious man :
Already has he met, nor void of fear,
Observ'd the fury of my flying spear.

His loss does ours exceed ; this fatal hand
Has cover'd with more corps the sanguine strand ;
If any doubt remains who dares the most,
To-morrow let us try on ULLIN's coast ;
Meanwhile, O CARRIL ! raise thy tuneful voice ;
Let deeds of former times our hearts rejoice.
Send thou away the tedious night in song,
And pour, O Bard ! the joy of grief along ;
For many heroes, many maids of love,
Of other days, on ERIN's plains did move ;
And sweet are heard on ALBION's rocks of snow,
The soothing strains of soft melodious wo,
When o'er the heath is ceas'd the hunter's noise,
And CONA's streams resound to OSSIAN's voice,

Then CARRIL thus began :—In former days,
Strangers to ERIN came far o'er the seas,

A thousand vessels bound along the main,
And pour their troops on ULLIN's lovely plain.
Against the race of dark-brown shields, arose
The sons of INNISFAIL to meet the foes;
The valiant CAIRBAR, first of men, was there;
And there did GRUDAR, stately youth, appear:
Long for the spotted bull the heroes strove;
The bull that low'd thro' GOLBUN's echoing grove;
Each claim'd him as his own, and on the heath,
Each in the strife had well nigh sunk in death;
Now friends and bold companions of the fight,
Against the common foe they join their might;
For side by side, amidst the warring course,
Where rag'd the Chiefs with unresisted force,
The sons of OCEAN are dispers'd and yield,
And leave them masters of the well-fought field;
Them victors, loud the shouting troops proclaim;
CAIRBAR and GRUDAR, thus were known to fame.

But ah ! that e'er on GOLBUN's echoing heath,
Low'd the fair bull that caus'd the hero's death ;
For lo ! triumphant as they came from fight,
'The fatal bull leap'd sportive in their fight ;
Stately he was and tempting to the view,
At this their hostile rage broke out anew :
Furious they fought by LUBAR's flowing stream ;
Young GRUDAR fell, bright as a transient beam.

To TURA's verdant vale fierce CAIRBAR came,
BRASSOLLIS there, the lovely mournful dame,
His fairest sister, vents her wo alone.
The hills resounded to her plaintive moan,
GRUDAR was ever lovely in her eye ;
Of her soft soul he was the secret sigh ;
His gallant deeds the subject of her strains ;
She pours the song of grief along the plains ;

She

She mourn'd him absent 'midst furrounding foes ;
Anxious for him her trembling soul arose.
For him her heavy breast is fill'd with sighs,
Yet hopes his safe return to bless her eyes.
Her snowy bosom from her robe is seen,
As shines the moon thro' clouds o'er heav'n's blue plain ;
And softer than the harp's melodious noise,
Amidst the song of grief she rais'd her voice.
On the young GRUDAR she had fix'd her soul ;
On him her eyes their secret looks did roll :
“ When shalt thou in thy shining arms appear ?
“ When shalt thou come, thou mighty in the war ? ”
Thus sung the fair, when CAIRBAR o'er the field
Came hastily, and rais'd a bloody shield,
And thus he said : BRASSOLLIS ! on the wall
Take and fix high this shield within my hall :
Let future times, my well-won trophies know,
This is the armour of my vanquish'd foe.

Her soft heart beat against her side ; she knew
The blood-stain'd arms ; distracted, pale, she flew ;
She found her lovely youth on CROMLA's heath,
Welt'ring in blood ; she sunk o'er him in death.
Here rests their dust, CUCHULIN, in our view,
From either grave there springs a lonely yew ;
Their mournful heads are nodding in the sky ;
Their bending branches wish to meet on high.
Fair was BRASSOLLIS on the grassy plain ;
Brave GRUDAR on the hill did glory gain.
The bards to future times their praise shall give ;
Fam'd in the song, their names shall ever live.

Pleasant thy voice, O CARRIL, to my ears !
And lovely are the words of other years ;
(Thus ERIN's chief) ; joy to my soul they bring,
As soft they fall, like the calm show'rs of spring,

When looks the sun hot beaming from on high,
And thin gray clouds along the green hills fly.
Now, CARRIL, of my love BRAGELA sing,
While to thy voice thou join'st thy trembling string :
Of DUNSCAICH's lonely sun-beam let me hear,
And with thy sweetest notes delight my ear :
Strike then the harp, in fair BRAGELA's praise,
Soft as her charms, pour forth the tender lays :
She, the lov'd spouse of gallant SEMO's son,
Now in Isle of Mist is left alone ;
Oft from the rocky margin of the main,
She looks to find my sails, but looks in vain :
Say, do'st thou raise thy fair face from the shore,
And hear the rolling seas at distance roar ?
Oft shall the foaming waves thro' dusky night,
For my white sails deceive thy weary sight.
Retire, my love ! Now clouds obscure the sky,
And in thy struggling hair the moist winds fly :

Go to my sounding halls, where oft was shar'd
The feast delicious by thy hands prepar'd ;
Where oft was heard the voice of mirth and joy ;
Where ev'ry hour in blifs we did employ :
Think on those happy times, when on thy breast
I sooth'd my sorrows, hush'd my cares to rest :
Now let them light the oak's resplendent fire,
Compos'd for rest, do thou from all retire.
Indulge this thought, and let thy hopes arise,
CUCHULLIN soon may come to blefs thy eyes ;
But not till ERIN's freed from war's alarms,
'Till hush'd to peace is the rude din of arms,
Shall he return—he'll drive th' invading foe
From ULLIN's coast, or will himself lie low.
Triumphant I shall reach my native shore,
Or DUNSCAICH's tow'ring halls behold no more.
O CONNAL ! lovely with her raven hair
Is SORGLAN's daughter of the bosom fair.

In grief and solitude she's left behind.

But now's no time—O send her from my mind !

Let me no longer think of her soft charms ;

Tell me of battles and of sounding arms.

To whom thus CONNAL, slow to speak, replied :

Against th' impending danger let's provide ;

Let thy dark troop of night be now prepar'd,

'Gainst OCEAN's race, and stand upon their guard ;

Let them go forth and watch with heedful care,

Lest SWARAN undertake the nightly war ;

Lest in dark ambush he the heath forelay,

Ere morning join our hosts in bloody fray :

Let all things needful for defence abound :

By turns let every hero walk the round :

'Tis fit that ev'ry Chief by night should share

The common danger, and divide the care :

For when, O Chief, th' occasion presses hard
'Tis wisdom 'gainst the worst to be prepar'd ! —
I was CUCHULLIN, and I am for peace ;
I wish'd to shun the war, 'til MORVEN's race
Came o'er the sea—till FINGAL, first of men,
Beam'd like the sun along green ULLIN's plain.

The hero struck the shield of his alarms,
Forth mov'd the warriors of the night in arms.
With heedful care they look around the coast,
And watch the motions of proud SWARAN's host.
The rest upon the heath of deer are laid,
And 'midst the dusky wind in sleep are spread.
The ghosts of those who lately fell in war,
Swim on the gloomy clouds and hover near ;
Like a thin smoke each flitting spirit flies,
And o'er his friends he raises feeble cries.
From far death's dismal voices all around
Are heard ; the heath is wrapt in night profound.

The ARGUMENT of BOOK II.

The ghost of Crugal, one of the Irish heroes who was killed in battle, appearing to Connal, foretels the defeat of Cuchullin in the next battle; and earnestly advises him to make peace with Swaran.—Connal communicates the vision; but Cuchullin is inflexible, from a principle of honour he would not be the first to sue for peace, and he resolved to continue the war.—Morning comes.—Swaran proposes dishonourable terms to Cuchullin, which are rejected.—The battle begins, and is obstinately fought for some time; until, upon the flight of Grumal, the whole of Cuchullin's army gave way.—Cuchullin and Connal make a noble stand, and cover their retreat.—Carril leads them to a neighbouring

bouring hill, whither they are soon followed by Cuchul-
 lin himself. Hence he descries the fleet of Fingal, ma-
 king towards the coast,—but night coming on, he loses
 sight of it.—Dejected after his defeat, he attributes
 his ill success to the death of Ferda, his friend, whom
 he had killed some time before.—Carril, to shew that
 ill success did not always attend those who innocently
 killed their friends, introduces the episode of Connal
 and Galvina.—In this book the poet teaches us the opi-
 nions that prevailed in his time, concerning the state of
 separate souls, and we also gather, that they thought the
 soul was material.—Few names unmentioned before
 occur in this book.—Colg-er, fierce, valiant man.—
 Morla, great hand.—Deu-gala, or Deo-geal, white or
 shining beam.—Comal, or Caomh-mhalla, mild, or
 calm brow.—Galvina, or Gealvin, fair, smooth, or soft
 tempered.—The names, Ferda and Damma seem no.

to belong to Galic originally ; at least, we cannot, at this day, derive them from that language —Ded-gal, white, smooth teeth.—Deo-grena, ray of the sun.—Mor-glan, brave, and graceful.—Conloch, or Ceun-laoch, mild hero.



F I N G A L

B O O K II.

NOW welcome sleep the weary troops relieves,
And after cares and labours past revives;

CONNAL, the valiant hero, speaks repose
Nigh where a mountain-stream in murmurs flows ;
Beneath an aged tree the Chief is laid,
A stone with all its moss supports his head ;
Shrill o'er the heath he hears, through dusky night,
The voice of those who lately fell in fight.

Nearest the foe, at distance from the rest,
The warrior lies—no fears possess his breast.
Dissolv'd in slumbers, from the busy day,
Forgetful of his toils as thus he lay ;
He thought he saw a dark-red fiery stream
Descend the hill, and on the shining beam
The ghost of CRUGAL to his eyes appears,
A Chief new-fall'n in ERIN's bloody wars :
Amidst the strife of heroes he was slain,
By SWARAN's fatal hand on ULLIN's plain.
Pale is his face, like the moon's setting ray,
Form'd of the clouds, his robes are thin and gray ;
Dim are his eyes, like two decaying flames,
And in his breast the dark wound freshly streams.

CRUGAL, thou son of DEDGAL ! CONNAL said ;
Thou breaker of the shields ! why pale and sad ?

Fam'd art thou on the hill of dark-brown deer ;
Nor have I ever known thee pale for fear.
What wound is that ? what terror cou'd disgrace
The manly features of thy blooming face ?
What can have thus disturb'd thee, prithee tell ?
What shades thy soul ? son of the founding hill !

Dim and in tears the phantom seems to stand,
And o'er the hero stretches his pale hand ;
Faint as the gale thro' LEO's reedy lake,
His feeble voice he rais'd, as thus he spake :

My shade along my native hills now flies,
On ULLIN's sands my breathless body lies ;
No more with thee sweet converse I'll maintain ;
Nor join against the foes the warrior train :
No more, victorious, from the field of death,
My steps thou'lt meet, or see them on the heath.

Light, as the whistling blast on CROMLA's sides,
My flitting ghost, like shadowy mist, now glides.
But CONNAL, son of COLGAR ! o'er the heath,
Dark-hovering I behold the cloud of death ;
It threatens ruin to young CORMAC's state ;
Its teeming womb is big with ERIN's fate :
You cannot long th' unequal strife maintain,
Fruitless your courage, and you fight in vain.
From far ill-omen'd sounds invade my ear,
Numberless shades shall soon on clouds appear ;
Green ERIN's sons must fall—their corps be strew'd
On LENA's heath ; the fields be drunk with blood.
Fore-warn'd, O Chief, betake thee hence with speed
Far from the field of ghosts—thy friends must bleed.—
Then, as the moon with sudden clouds o'ercast,
The phantom vanish'd midst the whistling blast.

CONNAL pursues it, as it flies away,
With words like these:—Why all this haste? O stay,
Thou fleeting shade, that by the winds art driv'n!
Stay, dark-red friend, lay by that beam of heav'n,
What lonely cave is thy abode? O tell,
On what green-headed hill now dost thou dwell?
Wilt thou descend upon thy radiant beam,
When headlong rushes down the mountain-stream?
Shall we not hear thy voice amidst the storm?
Say, wilt thou not display thy lovely form,
When thin gray ghosts around on clouds do glide,
Or on the desert's blast triumphant ride?

Thus to the ghost the soft-voic'd CONNAL said:
Then rose in all his glitt'ring arms array'd,
And to CŪCHULLIN came—The warrior 'woke,
And starting from his couch, to CONNAL spoke:

Why

Why, CONMAL, said the ruler of the car,
Why thus in arms thro' night dost thou appear ?
Thou didst upon the verge of ruin stand,
In my friend's blood I might embrue my hand ;
When startl'd by the unexpected sound,
My spear might have transfix'd thee to the ground ;
Thus might'st thou fall mistaken for my foe,
And I o'er thee might mourn with fruitless wo.
But what has made thee thus forsake thy rest ?
What are the thoughts that roll within thy breast ?
Can'st thou to tell me of the nightly foes ?
Sure no mean cause cou'd rob thee of repose.
Speak, COLGAR's son ! thy sage advice gives light,
As when the morning-ray dispels the night.

The ghost of CRUGAL to my closing eyes
All pale appear'd, he said, or seem'd to rise ;

The stars dim-twinkled thro' his airy frame ;
From his dark dwelling on the hill he came :
His feeble voice he rais'd, and when he spoke,
The sound, like distant streams in murmurs broke :
To us he is of death the messenger,
If longer we maintain destructive war.
Shou'd we again engage the num'rous foe,
Foul rout he prophecies, and direful wo.
He warn'd me to forsake this fatal place,
And I have come to bid thee sue for peace.
Better it is in time, my valiant friend,
To cease from toils, and let our labours end,
Than beaten, to abandon LENA's heath,
Or in th' unequal struggle sink in death.

Thou heard'st his voice then like the sounding storm,
Tho' stars dim-twinkled thro' his airy form !

(CUCHULLIN

(CUCHULLIN thus)—It was not CRUGAL's voice ;
Thou wast deceiv'd by the wind's mum'ring noise :
Or, if the form of CRUGAL did appear,
Why didst not force him to my presence here ?
O CONNAL, son of COLGAR ! didst inquire
To what dark lonely cave he does retire ?
On what green-headed hill does CRUGAL dwell ?
His place of rest where is it, canst thou tell ?
My sword might find that voice ; he shou'd relate
By force his knowledge of our future fate :
Small must his knowledge be, thou gallant friend !
Thou to his tale too ready faith didst lend :
Amidst the ranks thou saw'st him here to-day ;
Nor can he yet have wander'd far away :
His ghost still hovers near dark LENA's heath,
And who cou'd there inform him of our death ?

Then

Then CONNAL's voice of wisdom thus replies :
Ghosts ride on wings of winds along the skies;
Soon to the farthest regions of the air,
Born on the clouds the flitting shades repair;
Soon to their caves of rest return again,
And there unfold the fates of mortal men.
To whom the bold CUCHULLIN thus replies :
Tho' ghosts on wings of winds ride thro' the skies,
And roam to distant climes, how can they see
Th' event of things in dark futurity ?
Let other men believe the idle tale ;
Nought can their prophecies on me prevail ;
Let them forget me and forego their care
Of the dark leader of young CORMAC's war ;
Silent they ought within their caves to rest ;
They cannot change the purpose of my breast.
CUCHULLIN will not from proud SWARAN fly,
With the first dawn I mean his force to try.

If I shou'd fall, I'll fall amidst my fame ;
My tomb to future times shall bear my name :
The heath-tir'd hunter, as he passes by
Shall see my moss-grown stone, with tearful eye.
And who, BRAGELA ! can thy sorrows tell ?
With what strong throbs will thy high bosom swell ?
How wilt thou roll around thy mournful eyes ?
How wilt thou fill DUNSCAICH with piercing cries ?
Yet death in all its terrors I can dare—
But oh, to fly !—A coward !—that I fear.—
FINGAL; the first of mortal men in might,
Oft saw me conqu'ror from the bloody fight ;
And shou'd I now by groundless fears be sway'd,
He'd think CUCHULLIN had the cause betray'd.
Thou weak, thou fleeting phantom, wert thou here !
Shou'd'st thou all dim upon thy beam appear ;
Should'st thou ev'n now, before my presence stand, !
And show CUCHULLIN's death within thy hand ;

From LOCHLIN's num'rous host he shou'd not fly,
But on the dusky heath their strength defy.
Now CONNAL ! strike the shield of ERIN's wars,
There high it hangs betwixt the beaming spears ;
Let all my heroes hear the loud alarms,
And 'midst their dreams of battles rise to arms ;
Tho' mighty FINGAL bounds not o'er the sea,
Tho' MORVEN's sons their coming yet delay,
The race of stormy hills !— We'll fight for fame,
And not disgrace the race from which we came.
O COLGAR's son ! we'll fight, tho' all retire,
And nobly in our country's cause expire.

Brave CONNAL went and struck the bossy shield,
The hoarse-resounding noise spreads o'er the field.
As breaks a wave blue-rolling on the sands,
Sadden, to arms, arise green ERIN's bands.

At once they spring ; with looks denouncing death,
In rattling files they gather o'er the heath.
They seem like lofty oaks along the coast,
Which, echoing, answer to the stream of frost,
When thro' their wither'd leaves the winds resound,
And all their spreading branches wave around.

Now morn arising o'er dark CROMLA's height,
Had scarcely ting'd the east with rosy light :
The sea, half-brighten'd with the trembling ray,
Spreads its smooth face, and waits the coming day :
Green ERIN's sons, prepar'd in armour bright,
Stand silent, and expect the shock of fight :
When slowly swimming, blue-gray mists arise
And cover ERIN's bands from LOCHLIN's eyes.

The king of dark-brown shields, on ULLIN's sands,
Now first arose, and rous'd his gloomy bands :

Far o'er the heath his rolling eyes he threw,
No sound he hears, no foe appears in view.
Deluded SWARAN thought CUCHULLIN fled,
And with vain hopes his haughty fancy fed :
Then thus exulting, to his host he cries,
My bold companions of the war, arise ;
Behold a conquest gain'd without a fight ;
Our foes are fled safe under friendly night.
Arise, my friends, pursue them o'er the heath ;
Strew ERIN's plains with carnage and with death ;
Soon shall we end the small remains of war,
And reap the fruits of all our toil and care.
Thou, MORLA, hie thee to TEMORA's walls,
Bid CORMAC yield to me his founding halls ;
'Tis now in vain to struggle with his fate,
Or longer think to save the sinking state !
Let him resign the crown at my command,
And thus prevent the ruin of his land ;

Left desolation spread its dreary reign,
And death-like silence dwell on ULLIN's plain.
First victims of my rage his hated race
Shall fall; and fire his lofty tow'rs deface.
Destruction wide around him I shall pour;
And INNISFAIL shall mourn from shore to shore.

As when a flock of sea-fowl, screaming, rise,
Forc'd by the waves, and blacken all the skies,
With peals of shouts, thus LOCHLIN's sons arose:
They quit the sands and haste to seek their foes;
Loud as a thousand streams meet on the plain,
And roll their dark-brown eddies to the main.
When stormy night is pass'd, and morning's ray
Scarce on the hills proclaims th' approach of day,
The troops of SWARAN, with like hideous sound,
Thronging advance, the heath re-echoes round.

As Autumn's shadows o'er the mountains fly,
When clouds on clouds, successive, hide the sky,
The chiefs of LOCHLIN thus successive came ;
Behind them thus their gloomy squadrons seem.
The king of groves before them tall appear'd,
Like MORVEN's branchy stag amidst the herd ;
His shield enormous on his side shines bright,
As spreading flames upon the heath thro' night :
When awful silence o'er the world is spread,
And all around grim darkness rears its head,
The lonely trav'ler startles at the gleam,
And sees a ghost gray sporting in the beam.

Thus on they came, when, sudden, from the sea,
A blast arising drives the mist away ;
Bright, issuing from the cloud, reveal'd to fight,
Green ERIN's sons they see prepar'd for fight.

Like

Like rocks along the shore appear the bands
In firm array ; their spears are in their hands.

The king of LOCHLIN views them with surprise ;
He stops, and scornful rolls his fiery eyes.
Before his ranks he stalks with tow'ring stride,
And thus to MORLA speaks in words of pride :

The foes, how few, thou seest—Go, bid them cease
The fruitless rage of arms, and take my peace.
To try us on the field again were vain,
Their ranks so thinn'd, their bravest heroes slain.
Again if rashly to the fight they go,
Each second man of ours will miss a foe ;
For here as I survey their glitt'ring band,
With ease I count their numbers as they stand.
Go, MORLA ! tell them that such terms I give,
As prostrate monarchs at my hands receive,

When I return victorious from the fray,
And nations trembling bend beneath my sway;
When slaughter'd heroes o'er the field are spread,
And white-arm'd virgins mourn the mighty dead :

He said—With haughty step great MORLA came,
And o'er the heath his figure seem'd on flame;
His glitt'ring arms resound ;—above the rest
The valiant son of SEMO he address'd :

By me the king of LOCHLIN bids thee cease
The rage of arms and take his proffer'd peace.
Such terms to thee, CUCHULLIN, he will give,
As kings when vanquish'd at his hands receive;
When trembling nations in his presence bow,
And white-arm'd virgins wail with ceaseless wo.
Thou seest thy force, how weak :—What hope remains
But that to us thou yield fair ULLIN's plains ;

Alfo thy fpoufe, high-bosom'd heaving fair ;
Thy dog that overtakes the nimble deer.
On other terms our king difdains to treat,
Than that you lie like vaffals at his feet ;
Green INNISFAIL be ours, from fhore to fhore ;
And henceforth own the mighty SWARAN's pow'r.

To whom, unmov'd, the blue-ey'd Chief reply'd :
Go, MORLA, back, and tell that heart of pride,
That I reject his terms and will not yield ;
But here fhall fight him on th' embattl'd field.
I never will resign green ULLIN's plains
While life's warm fpirit flows within my veins.
Few as we are, the boafter cannot fay
We yet are vanquish'd, or were forc'd away.
Resolv'd we are, once more to try our fate :
Events are doubtful which on battle wait.

Thro'

Thro' his throng ranks we mean to cut our way,
And drive them trembling to the rolling sea.
Then shall they bound in terror o'er the waves,
Or stay, and here, in ERIN, find their graves.
DUNSCAICH's fair sun-beam never shall be led !
My lov'd BRAGELA ! to a stranger's bed.
Never, while I can wield my trusty sword,
Shall she submit to any foreign lord.
Never shall LUATH, whose speed outstrips the wind,
O'er LOCHLIN's hills pursue the dark-brown hind.

Then MORLA thus :—Vain ruler of the car,
Canst thou with LOCHLIN's king contend in war ?
Dost thou pretend to vie with him in might,
Or meet his thick embattled host in fight,
Whose ships of many groves cou'd, o'er the sea,
This isle with all its hills at once convey ?

What then is ULLIN, or its scanty shore,
To him for whom the stormy seas do roar ?

MORLA, the chief of ERIN thus replies,
(While rage indignant sparkles in his eyes) :
I yield to many for a stream of words,
But when fair Honour's call demands our swords,
None e'er shall see me basely quit the fight,
Or seek for safety in ignoble flight.

While I and CONNAL view the light of day,
Young CORMAC only shall green ERIN sway ;
First shall we both be stretch'd upon the plain,
Ere SWARAN shall possess this fair domain :
We never will submit to terms so base
As SWARAN sends ; we scorn his proffer'd peace ;
We will not fly tho' all the rest retire ;
We'll fight your king till he or we expire.

O CONNAL, didst not listen with disdain
To MORLA's empty vaunts and lofty strain ?
My valiant friend ! say, art thou now for peace ?
Cou'dst thou submit to terms so mean and base ?
Th' insulting foe shall we not rather meet,
Than suppliant bow at haughty SWARAN's feet ?
Yes, breaker of the shields ! we'll strive for fame,
Alive or dead we shall deserve a name.
O CRUGAL's shade ! in vain on LENA's heath
Our doom thou hast denounc'd, and threaten'd death.
A bloody victory the foes must gain ;
Their shock we are determin'd to sustain :
Our country bids, and we obey the call ;
And if we perish we shall nobly fall.
If death awaits me, fame that death will crown ;
I'll sink amidst the light of my renown.
Warriors, advance ! be firm, dismiss all fear,
Bend the tough bow, exalt the pointed spear ;

Like ocean in a storm rush on to fight;
Meet the throng foe like spirits of the night.

This said, he onwards led his martial train
Tow'rds SWARAN's host that cover'd all the plain :
Their leader's words their bounding hearts excite,
They rage, they rush, they thicken to the fight ;
Then dismal, roaring, fierce, they roll along
The deep'ning gloom of war, 'gainst LOCHLIN'S
throng ;

As when thick mist along the vale is driv'n,
When storms invade the silent face of heav'n.
Full in the front the Chief undaunted rides,
As when an angry ghost a cloud bestrides ;
When meteors all their fires around him pour,
And in his dreadful hand the dark winds roar.
CARRIL, of other times, far on the heath,
Bids the loud horn resound to arms and death ;

Himself

Himself the war-song raises, and inspires
Their souls with ardor, and with martial fires.

Ah! where, he sings, is valiant CRUGAL now?
The blooming hero lies forgot and low.
Within his silent halls, no more is found
The strength of shells, or music's soothing sound:
As yet a stranger there, his spouse now mourns;
The voice of mirth to sudden sorrow turns;
All the fair prospect is with clouds o'erspread,
Her tears for him, so late espous'd, are shed.
What sun-beam fair thus sudden meets our eyes?
What's she that from the hostile ranks thus flies?
Fall'n CRUGAL's spouse it is that now appears
With hasty pace, distracted with her fears:
It is DEGRENA! lovely mournful fair;
The wind is struggling in her flowing hair;

Trembling

Trembling she looks around her as she flies;
Shrill is her voice, red are her tearful eyes.
Ah! hapless dame! too soon immers'd in wo!
Thy CRUGAL now unhonour'd lies and low.
His naked corse unbury'd in the grave;
His airy form frequents the hilly cave;
Of him who was so lovely on our plains,
A green and empty shade alone remains,
Which to the ear of rest shall often come,
As born on blasts he o'er the heath doth roam:
Like mountain-bees that make a humming noise,
Or ev'ning-flies, he'll raise his feeble voice.
But lo! DEGRENA sinks upon the plain;
Alas! she, struggling, heaves for breath in vain;
Transpierc'd by LOCHLIN's spear, in death she lies,
Like morning-clouds she's vanish'd from our eyes.
CAIRBAR! the object of thy tend'rest care,
Source of thy hopes, fairest among the fair,

Behold

Behold where now thy pride, thy soul's delight,
Breathless and pale, lies bleeding in our sight.
Unhappy father ! canst thou see her low,
And not avenge her on the cruel foe ?
Now is no time to mourn DEGRENA lost,
But pour destruction on dark LOCHLIN's host.

From far fierce CAIRBAR hears the mournful sound,
He finds his daughter weltring on the ground ;
Like ocean's whale he rushes in his course,
And roars 'midst thousands with impetuous force ;
He lays a mighty Chief of LOCHLIN dead ;
From wing to wing the battle wide is spread.
At once both hosts in bloody fight are clos'd :
'Gainst hero hero, man to man oppos'd.
So dire the shock, so fierce the combat proves,
As hundred winds that roar thro' LOCHLIN's groves ;

Or as a fire with raging fury burns
Upon a hundred hills, and firs o'erturns ;
So loud, so ruinous, along the heath
The ranks of men, hewn down, are stretch'd in death :
Heroes like thistles by CUCHULLIN'S hand
Bestrew the field, while ERIN'S valiant band,
Wasted by SWARAN, sunk beneath his force,
Where dark he rag'd in his resistless course :
By his strong hand is valiant CUROACH kill'd,
And dauntless CAIRBAR of the bossy shield ;
In lasting rest soon after MORGLAN lies :
The blooming CAOLT falls, and quiv'ring dies ;
Stretch'd on the dust of his own native plains,
His snowy breast the streaming blood distains ;
His yellow hair is waving on the heath ;
Oft had he spread the feast where now in death
He lay ; oft there the harp's melodious sound
He rais'd ; his dogs for joy have leapt around,

When

When for the chace his train prepar'd the bow,
Ere to green ULLIN came th' invading foe.

The ranks of ERIN thinn'd, at last give way,
Crowds pour'd on crowds oppress them in the fray ;
Yet spurr'd by shame, impatient of disgrace,
Where one man falls another fills his place :
By odds o'ermatch'd, they just recede from fight,
Move tardy back, and scorn ignoble flight.
Like lightning SWARAN presses on their rear,
And ERIN's sons scarce stand his bold career.
Fierce he drives on ; the fields around are strow'd
With heaps of slain, the heath is drunk with blood.
As when a stream with sudden thund'ring sound
Bursts from the desert, and o'erleaps each mound ;
Bears down the little hills with rapid tide,
And shews the rocks, half-sunk, along its side :

With rage no less, grim SWARAN o'er the field
Came rolling on, and forc'd the bands to yield.
But SEMO's gallant son alone repell'd
The strength of LOCHLIN, and restor'd the field;
Oppos'd to its fierce shock he singly staid,
And stood his ground all firm and undismay'd.
So when its top an airy mountain hides
Among the clouds, its shoulders and its sides
A shady forest clothes; its curled brow
Frowns over CONA's stream that runs below;
The roaring storms its lofty forehead beat;
Floods roll in vain, it moves not from its feat;
Its rocks and woods resound with patt'ring hail;
Proudly it stands and shades the silent vale;
'Midst thronging foes the hero stands inclos'd,
To all their swords and darts, at once expos'd.
Unmov'd, his friends thus shading, he remains
'Mong rolling thousands, and their threats disdains.

As from a fount, blood bursting round is spread
From panting heroes by him prostrate laid.
But ERIN's sons are scatter'd o'er the plain,
Th' unequal strife no longer they maintain.
On either wing they yield and fall away,
As snow dissolves beneath the sun's warm ray.

“ O sons of INNISFAIL, said GRUMAL, yield !
“ The troops of LOCHLIN conquer on the field :
“ What need we strive, as reeds against the wind ?
“ Fly to the hill where haunts the dark-brown hind.”
Then swift as MORVEN's stag, he fled for fear,
And, trembling, drags along his shining spear.
Few fly with dastard GRUMAL o'er the plain,
Most stay, and fighting on the heath are slain ;
Amidst the strife of heroes sink to rest,
Struck thro' with wounds all glorious on the breast.

High on his car of gems CUCHULLIN stood
Before his friends, besmear'd with dust and blood;
A mighty chief of LOCHLIN low he laid,
Then thus in haste to valiant CONNAL said:
CONNAL ! 'twas thou first taught this art of death ;
Tho' ERIN's sons have fled along the heath,
We'll stay, my gallant friend, and fight the foe,
That future times our martial deeds may know.
CARRIL ! the few surviving troops convey
To yonder bushy hill, there with them stay.
Meanwhile, O CONNAL ! here we shall oppose,
Like rocks, the rushing torrent of our foes.
Ascend my car, undaunted, let us wait,
And save the small remains of ERIN's state ;
One brave effort, O Chief ! here let us try
To screen our flying friends, or let us nobly die.

CONNAL

CONNAL in haste ascends the glitt'ring car,
The heroes stem the tide of LOCHLIN'S war ;
Slow they retreat, and hardly lose their ground,
Tho' with a grove of spears encompass'd round ;
Before their friends, their blood-stain'd shields they
held,

Which seem'd like darken'd moons along the field.
The more they lose, the foes advance the more,
And tread in ev'ry step they trode before.
They swarm, they throng, confus'd ; and whom by
might

They cannot conquer, they oppress with weight.
Shouting aloud, grim SWARAN leads the chase,
The heroes sudden wheel about, and face,
Receive their foes, and raise a threat'ning cry,
Who, broken, take their turn to fear and fly.
The more they kill the greater numbers grow,
A thronger harvest still remains to mow.

Green ERIN's sons, at length, are safe bestow'd,
The chiefs o'erspent, with loosen'd reins then rode;
Them, panting, up the hill the courfers drew;
Still at their heels th' impending foes pursue.
As waves behind a whale roll tow'rd's the shore,
Behind them thus the troops of LOCHLIN pour,
At utmost speed the heroes urge their flight,
And soon, unhurt, they gain the neighb'ring height.

As after flames thro' lofty groves are driv'n
By rushing blasts that sweep the face of heav'n ;
Bare stand the trees, their naked boughs they show,
Their singed tops nod o'er the mountain's brow.
Thus, on the rising side of CROMLA's height,
Stand ERIN's few sad sons escap'd from fight.
At distance from the troops CUCHULLIN stood,
Beside a spreading oak amidst the wood ;

Downcast

Downcast and dark, he leans against his shield,
And silent rolls his red eye o'er the field ;
Thro' his dark bushy hair, the wind he hears
Struggling, when MORAN suddenly appears,
The scout of ocean ; joy was o'er his face,
As tow'ards the Chief he came with hasty pace.

Lo ! from the lonely isle, aloud he cries,
The ships of MORVEN's sons now met my eyes ;
There FINGAL comes to fight on ULLIN's plain,
The breaker of the shields ! the first of men.
High-bounding o'er the deep his fleet I spy,
Round his black prows the billows foaming fly.
Like groves in clouds appear his masts with sails ;
Soon will he reach the coast with fav'ring gales.

Far o'er the deep his eyes CUCHULLIN threw,
And thus, as FINGAL's vessels met his view :

Ye winds ! that round my Isle of Mist do roar,
And raise the white waves on its lovely shore !
Propitious blow, with speed to ULLIN's coast
Bring the redoubled hero with his host !
Chief of the hills of hinds ! O haste to fight,
And 'midst the death of thousands roll thy might :
The golden clouds that gild the morning-skies,
Not more than thy white sails delight my eyes :
The light of heav'n does not rejoice me more
Than thy tall ships approaching ULLIN's shore :
Thyself a fiery pillar 'midst the night,
Dispell'st the darkness with thy dazzling light.
How pleasant CONNAL ! are our valiant friends ?
Lo ! mighty FINGAL to our aid descends.
But dusky night rolls down upon the plain,
And spreads its sable mantle o'er the main :
Where now are FINGAL's ships ?—my friend ! let's here
Pass the dark hours till morning's ray appear :

Here

Here let us sit amidst the gloom of night,
And with the moon to shew her silver light.

The winds came rushing on the waving woods ;
O'er the dark rocks the torrents roll their floods.
On CROMLA's head the rain is gath'ring round ;
The red stars trembling 'twixt the clouds are found.
Beneath a tree, indulging gloomy grief,
Beside a founding stream, sat ERIN's Chief ;
The mighty CONNAL, COLGAR's son, was near,
And CARRIL, bard of other times, was there :
Silent a while they sit, and hear the sound
Of roaring winds and streams remurm'ring round ;
Till great CUCHULLIN, in these words, express'd
The gloomy thoughts that roll'd in his dark breast ;

Unhappy is the hand of SEMO's son,
In vain his valour in the fight is shown ;

Success no more will on my arms attend,
Since with this hand I slew my faithful friend.
FERDA, thou son of DAMMAN ! dear to me
As my own soul thou wast, and I to thee ;
Yet thou by me on MURI'S hills wast slain,
And ever since I lift the sword in vain.

Well I remember DAMMAN'S noble son, —
Thus CONNAL spoke, —no dangers wou'd he shun ;
Fair was he as a rainbow on the plain ;
Tall was his stature ; manly was his mien.
Say, Chief, from whence began that fatal strife ?
How lost the breaker of the shields his life ?

FERDA, he said, from ALBION, o'er the sea
Arriv'd—a hundred hills there own'd his sway—
In MURI'S hall he learn'd the spear to throw,
The sword to wield, to bend the crooked bow ;

There

There he my friendship won—nought cou'd efface
Our love ; we mov'd together to the chace ;
One was our bed upon the dusky heath ;
Together oft we trode the field of death.

Not far liv'd CAIRBAR, Chief of ULLIN's plain :
DEUGALA ! loveliest of the lovely train
Was his fair spouse—enchanting to the sight
She was ; with beauty clothed as with light ;
But her dark heart, the mansion, was of pride :
She wou'd no longer stay by CAIRBAR's side.
On DAMMAN's noble son she fix'd her eyes,
That youthful sun-beam rais'd her secret sighs.
To CAIRBAR then the white-arm'd woman came,
And in bold words thus spake the lovely dame :
For ever, CAIRBAR, I forsake thy halls ;
No more will I remain within thy walls ;

No longer will I lie within thy arms,
Thou art unworthy to possess my charms :
Too long thy unkind treatment have I bore ;
Now share thy wealth, and give me half thy store ;
Divide thy herd, O CAIRBAR ! let me go
Where happiness I far from thee may know :
To my own native plains I now retire,
There with my friends to live, and aged fire.

Depart, fair damsel, CAIRBAR thus reply'd,
Thou light of beauty ! but thou heart of pride :
Since such thy choice I do not urge thy stay ;
My herd I shall divide without delay.
Of all my wealth thou shalt have ample share,
Wherewith to thy old fire thou mayst repair :
Justice does in CUCHULLIN'S breast reside,
And he my herds shall on the hill divide.

Together

Together to the hill we then repair
Where CAIRBAR's cattle lay—An equal share
To each I gave—one snow-white bull remains;
Him CAIRBAR, by my partial voice, retains:
At this DEUGALA's kindled wrath arose,
Complaining loud, to DAMMAN's son she goes,
(To him it was, not to her fire, she came),
And thus in tears began the lovely dame:
FERDA! for thee I suffer in my fame;
Bereft of honour, and expos'd to shame!
Thou must avenge me on CUCHULLIN's heart;
Let his last spirit smoke upon thy dart,
Else of my death thou suddenly shalt hear;
In LUBAR's stream I'll bury my despair:
My wand'ring ghost, arising from the deep,
Shall haunt thee waking, and disturb thy sleep;
Thou'lt hear it still lament, that I apply'd
To thee in vain t' avenge my wounded pride.

Grant

Grant me—to shed his blood—this one request—
Or take thy sword and pierce this heaving breast.

Here paus'd the dame—unmov'd he holds his eyes,
And in his breast the stiff'd sighs arise :
The youth in deep amaze a while thus stood,
Then said :—And can I shed CUCHULLIN's blood ?
Thou know'st, fair dame, no terror to my view,
No frightful face of danger can be new ;
But 'gainst my best-lov'd friend to lift my hand,
Thou'dst be the first my odious name to brand.
In all my trusty secrets he has part ;
By strictest bonds united to my heart.
Against this friend I'll never lift the sword ;
Sooner shall it be turn'd against its lord.

The dame three days before him was in tears ;
Her sighs, her pray'rs, her plaints, unmov'd, he hears ;
She

She tries caresses, and each winning art,
To shake the stubborn purpose of his heart;
His soften'd soul at length her threat'nings move,
His friendship staggers, and gives way to love.

'Tis done, said he, fair dame,—to fight my friend
I go; but may I perish by his hand :
How cou'd I wander on the hill, and see
My friend's tomb rise, and that friend slain by me ?

He came—we went—on Muri's hills we strove—
Our swords avoid a wound, and bloodless prove ;
High on our helms of steel they turn aside,
And sounding from our slipp'ry shields they slide.

DEUGALA on the fatal hill was near,
With scornful smile to FERDA spake the fair :

Great skill and courage dost thou show in fight,
But 'gainst CUCHULLIN feeble is thy might ;
Thou hast not yet arriv'd, with equal length
Of years, to match his bulk with equal strength.
Sun-beam of youth ! too weak thy arm to wield
The beaming sword, or raise the heavy shield :
Thou canst not stand the son of SEMO'S flock,
Yield, FERDA ! strong is he as MALMOR'S rock.

With eyes suffas'd in tears and lab'ring breast,
The fair-hair'd youth these words to me address'd :
O friend ! thou must display thy utmost might ;
Thou must prepare thyself for closer fight ;
Exert thy force, and raise thy bossy shield,
For one of us this day must press the field.
Unhappy me ! that undertook the strife,
Or I must fall or rob my friend of life.

As to the blast resounds a hollow rock,
I sigh'd, but stood prepar'd to meet his shock;
My shield I rais'd, I wav'd my shining steel,
Keen-edg'd, and with resistless sway it fell:
The sun-beam of the battle felt the wound;
My dearest friend lay breathless on the ground.
Unhappy am I on th' embattl'd plain,
Since the young hero by my arm was slain.

Mournful, says CARRIL, is the tale you've told,
It rolls my soul back on the years of old.
Of COMAL I have heard, whose erring hand
Stretch'd on the earth his best beloved friend;
Yet still victorious, on the well-fought field
He scatter'd hosts, and made the mighty yield.
He also was a Chief of ALBION'S plains,
A hundred hills he sway'd, and large domains;

A thousand streams with drink his deer supply'd ;
To his fleet dogs a thousand rocks reply'd :
Mildness of youth adorn'd his ruddy face ;
His gen'rous soul scorn'd aught was mean or base.
Dire in the fight, when rose his kindled ire,
His arm laid heroes low, made hosts retire.
One was his love,—and passing fair the dame,—
Daughter to CONLOCH, of far-sounding fame.
'Mong women she a sun-beam did appear,
Dark, as the raven's glossy wing, her hair ;
With nimble dogs she oft pursu'd the roe ;
The forest oft resounded to her bow.
On blooming COMAL she her soul had fix'd,
Their meeting eyes of love soft glances mix'd,
Together to the chase they oft repair,
And happy were their words in secret there.
The neighb'ring Chief of ARDVEN's gloomy shade,
GRUMAL, the dark ! with love pursu'd the maid ;

He

He often watch'd her lone steps on the heath ;
And, foe to COMAL, he design'd his death.

It chanc'd one day, returning from the chase
Fatigu'd, when mist had cover'd all the place,
COMAL, and CONLOCH's daughter, happy pair !
Hid from their friends, to RONNAN's cave repair.
Within this cave brave COMAL oft resides ;
His shining arms adorn its rocky sides.
A hundred folded shields of thongs are there ;
A hundred helms of sounding steel appear.

Arriv'd, thus COMAL to GALVINA said :
Thou light of RONNAN's cave, rest here fair maid !
A deer I have espy'd, on MORA's brow,
I go to slay it with my bending bow.
Secure from ev'ry harm, thou here may'st stay,
Assur'd I will return without delay.

I'll stay, my love ! she said, and yet I fear,
My foe, dark GRUMAL,—he comes often here.
I'll lie conceal'd among thy shining arms,
Return with speed, and rid me of alarms.

The hero straight to MORA's thaggy side
Betook him where the dark-brown deer he spy'd.
Th' ill-fated maid, resolv'd to try his love,
All clad in shining armour forth did move
From RONNAN's cave, and strode to MORA's brow :
COMAL beheld, and took her for his foe ;
His colour chang'd, his lab'ring heart beat high,
A sudden darkness dimm'd each rolling eye.
Full, at the fair, his twanging bow he drew ;
With aim too sure the winged arrow flew :
GALVINA fell in blood.—With eager haste
And wildness, in his speed, the hero pass'd

To

TO RONNAN'S cave :—he casts around his eyes,
Where art thou? O my love ! come forth,—he cries.—
He hears no answer in the lonely rock.
His fears arise, he feels a dreadful shock :
He ran, he flew ; he found her heaving heart
Beating in pangs around the feather'd dart.
“ O CONLOCH'S daughter !” grief his voice suppress'd,
Fainting, he sunk upon her snowy breast.

The hunters came, and found the hapless pair.
Again he trod the hill, but nought could cheer
His sadden'd soul—With heavy pace and slow
He stalk'd, a moving monument of wo ;
His friends he shunn'd, but often from the cave
Mournful his steps were round GALVINA'S grave.—

A fleet of strangers on fair ALBION'S coast
Arrives, and lands a throng and warlike host.

With

With all his friends he rose, the foe he fought,
Whom, less for glory than for death, he fought.
He plunges 'midst their thickest ; on the field
Their ranks he scatters, and constrains to yield.
Expos'd to death, he lives not by his fault ;
No foe at hand dares give the death he fought.
In deep despair he threw away his shield ;
A friendly arrow stretch'd him on the field.—
Now, by the sounding margin of the deep,
Beside his lov'd GALVINA does he sleep :
Their grass-green tombs the mariner espies,
As bounding o'er the northern waves he flies.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.







